The Swedenborgian influence on William Blake

Thesis

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THE SWEDENBORGIAN INFLUENCE ON WILLIAM BLAKE

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ABSTRACT

"The Swedenborgian influence on William Blake"

The aim of the thesis is to examine the Blake-Swedenborg connection, and the influence this Swede's writings may have had on Blake's published work. In particular The Songs of Innocence and of Experience and The Marriage of Heaven and Hell are considered in detail to assess a Swedenborgian influence. Also discussed are the annotations Blake made to his copies of Swedenborg's works, namely Heaven and Hell, Divine Love and Wisdom, and Divine Providence. A survey is made of the important literature expressing the Blakean perspective and the Swedenborgian perspective on the relationship. Blake's ambivalence towards Swedenborg is noted in the various periods of his life. The principal Swedenborgian symbols used by Blake are analysed.

To set this examination in a Swedenborgian historical context, the development of the early New Church is briefly recorded, showing the links Blake had with Swedenborgian friends and Patrons. A detailed study is made of the Propositions placed before the first General Conference of the New Church and what might have been Blake's reactions to them as he attended the Conference.

The thesis concludes with a discussion of the use of the word 'influence', both directly and indirectly as it applies to the Blake-Swedenborg connection. It is accepted that Blake was influenced directly for at least a part of his life by his Swedenborgian reading, and that the ideas gathered were never completely dismissed by him.

As a contribution to the continuing study of the Blake-Swedenborg connection, archival material, and sketches and portraits of personalities known to Blake, who had strong Swedenborgian links, are gathered from many world wide locations.

WILLIAM BLAKE

28 November 1757 - 12 August 1827

EMANUEL SWEDENBORG

29 January 1688 - 29 March 1772

"The works of this visionary (Swedenborg) are well worthy the attention of Painters and Poets; they are foundations for grand things'.

-Blake

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List Of Illustrations

TEXTS

The following texts are used in this study:

BLAKE:

The Songs of Innocence and Experience
Edited by Geoffrey Keynes, (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1989)

The Marriage of Heaven and Hell
Edited by Geoffrey Keynes, (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1988)

Other quotations from:

Blake Complete Writings
Edited by Geoffrey Keynes, (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1979)

The Complete Poetry & Prose of William Blake
Edited by David V. Erdman, Commentary by Harold Bloom
(New York: Anchor Books, 1982)

"Blake's Annotations on Swedenborg's THE DIVINE PROVIDENCE", M. Stanley Redgrove, New Church Magazine Jan-Mar 1925, pp. 38-44

SWEDENBORG:

Heaven and Hell
Translated by William Cookworthy, revised by Thomas Hartley
(London: R. Hindmarsh,1784)

Divine Love and Wisdom
Translated by N. Tucker, (London: W.Chalklen 1788)

Divine Providence
Translated by N. Tucker, with Preface by John Clowes
(London: R. Hindmarsh,1790)

Other quotations from:

Standard Editions issued by the Swedenborg Society, London.

INTRODUCTION

It could be said that Blake's religious feelings shine through all his work. But the nearest he comes to defining his theological thought is expressed in the three tiny tractates, There is no natural religion I and II, and All religions are one, produced in 1788. In these works he is beginning a system of ideas. He is conscious that mankind has a false view of man, God and being. The chief targets of his countersystem are 'Bacon, Newton and Locke"; they express for Blake the assumptions of materialism and the exaltation of reason.[1] Such left no room for imagination and the exercise of poetic genius. Radical thinking and revolution were not far from Blake's mind, but he realised that it was more prudent to express these things in private, or else through the cosmic myth which was developing in his thinking. Thus his political actions could not be brought to court, but through his work he broadened his sense of 'democracy' to apocalyptic proportions.[2] Blake said that 'The Nature of my Work is Visionary or Imaginative', for vision is not hallucination, it is imaginative insight.[3]

With such a temperament he was drawn to and much influenced by the mystical writers: mystic is a title he has acquired through his own work

though visionary might be the better term to describe Blake. Of this faculty of visions his confidant Henry Crabb Robinson said that Blake spoke as one who had this gift from early infancy.[4]

A writer often associated with Blake's thought is the eighteenth century Swedish scientist, philosopher and theologian, Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772).[5] Blake makes persistent reference to him, even in his later writings after he had sought to disclaim him in his work The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, which many regard as a satire on Swedenborg's Heaven and Hell.

Symons has remarked that Blake was even a 'heretic of the heresy of Swedenborg'.[6] This could imply that Blake's presentation of Swedenborg's thought was not the accepted orthodox position. Or it could suggest the 'Tulkite Heresy'. C. A. Tulk, who was a patron of William Blake, had his own idealistic interpretation of Swedenborgianism which helped to shape the course of Swedenborgian thought in the nineteenth century.[7] Tulk believed that Swedenborg's work contained truths of incalcuable importance, and their effects would be found in the hearts and minds of men everywhere. Any sectarian establishment, even one based on the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg, would impede the development of the spiritual New Church on earth.

Over the years there has developed 'the legend that Blake's boyhood was steeped in Swedenborgianism' and that it has flourished 'as a categorical statement even in texts where supporting evidence has been cut away'.[8] There is constant reference to his father having a knowledge of the New Church, maybe even a worshipper, and his library having contained a number of Swedenborg's works.[9] But to what extent was this an influence on Blake, and was he ever a 'true' Swedenborgian?

Without doubt Blake makes reference to Swedenborg in a number of his writings,[10] but bearing in mind his own abhorrence of ecclesiastical

institutions, it is doubtful whether he was ever a full worshipping member of the New Jerusalem Church.[11] There is substantial evidence, which demands careful examination, to show that he was associated with a number of early Swedenborgians. Association of friendship, or even of patronage, does not automatically make you either a believer or a declared member of the New Jerusalem Church, which appears to be the corollary assumed of many Blakean biographers.[12] Little is known of Blake's religious interests and activities in the first thirty years of his life. There is documentation to show that he was baptised in St. James's Church, Piccadilly, married in St. Mary's Church, Battersea, and buried along with the rest of the Blake family in Bunhill Fields, which was a dissenters' burial ground.[13] The religious affiliation of his parents is given as that of dissenter, with the suggestion that they may have attended the Baptist Church, Grafton Street.[14] But in 1789 there is an open declaration of William Blake's religious feelings: this is his signed attestation to the resolutions passed at the First General Conference of the New Jerusalem Church.[15] The chief purpose of the Conference was to approve of the Theological Writings of Emanuel Swedenborg, believing that the Doctrines contained therein are genuine Truths, revealed from Heaven, and that the New Jerusalem Church ought to be established, distinct and separate from the Old Church. Blake was well aware of this fact before consenting to attend the Conference, because the letter of invitation made the matter plain.[16] To what extent Blake was aware of the opposition to this proposal by the Swedenborgians in the Manchester area, under the leadership of the Rev. John Clowes, Rector of St. John's, Deansgate, as well as by a number who attended the Theosophical Society in London, is a matter of conjecture. No doubt Blake's radical spirit was such that he could be drawn to a group set on changing the status quo of the Established Church. But it

was not long before there was a change in his mind, and the feeling that the New Jerusalem Church would be no different from the Church of England with its rituals and ceremonies. Ideas, concepts and symbols were more dear to Blake's heart than the structure of formal institutions.

Blake's opinion of Swedenborg is expressed in an interesting and revealing way through the annotations he made on some of Swedenborg's writings. The Marriage of Heaven and Hell may suggest a volte-face for Blake. An examination will be made of the discernible changes of mood to be found in Blake's work in relation to Swedenborg's influence. Some Blakean scholars have suggested the strong influence of Jacob Boehme at the time of the writing of The Marriage of Heaven and Hell.[17] There is certainly no indication to suggest that overall the influence of Boehme's thought was greater than that of Swedenborg's Writings: indeed the reverse appears to be the case. Blake can say of Swedenborg that he had 'done much and will do much good'.[18]

William Blake had a great love of the Bible, Milton and Shakespeare, for here he could find the challenge of the poetic imagination. All artistic and literary allegory stems from the idea that images in this world can represent eternal truths. 'Thus the effect of Swedenborg upon Blake's art is not to be measured in terms of direct influence, but must be seen as part of the clarification in Blake's mind of the spiritual role of art itself'.[19] Swedenborg's main concern was with the Bible, not art; he saw the Bible as containing spiritual truth in the historical events as stated. He drew a distinction between the literal sense of the Bible and its internal sense: this inner meaning was not discovered by exegesis and deduction, but only through direct revelation to men who were inspired. Swedenborg's commentaries on the Bible revealed the internal sense. The

notion expressed in Swedenborg's doctrine of Correspondences was to become central to Blake's mature work. His illustrations of the Bible contain implicit allegories, even if these are not always easily discernible. Swedenborg gave Blake a systematic way of recording the image as a reflection of the form of the Divine.

Blake perceived and valued the spirituality to be found in Swedenborg's Writings, for he recognised a spiritual experience that was at the heart of the theology. Imagination and not solely reason had a part to play in religion that was expressed in life. He wrote in 1788, 'The Whole of the New Church is in the Active Life & not in Ceremonies at all'.[20] Thus, if institutions fail, the ideas, concepts and symbols of the poetic genius will not do so. The artist, in expressing his God-given talents, cannot fail to use the material presented to him through the eye of vision, in order that his own imagination may be stimulated. For this reason Blake recommends that all artists should read Swedenborg.[21] So for the rest of his life Blake could not ignore what he had learned from his spiritual teacher.[22] The two fundamentals of Swedenborgian doctrine were the concept of the Godhead, that in the Lord Jesus Christ was the One God in the One Divine Humanity, and that the faith was to be conjoined with the good of life.[23] These fundamentals Blake was ready to accept, and in this sense remained a Swedenborgian all his life, despite the strong reservations that he made in his annotations of Swedenborg's writings.

Blake was a visionary not only through his work but because of his own experiences. The religious experience cannot be overlooked in any assessment of influences upon him. In his own mind he was susceptible to those inner forces of the spirit. With his artistic talent he was able to give the spirit full range of expression. Blake

accepted readily the part played by the 'poetic genius', which he believed to be the spirit of God in man. It was also the source of religion for him. It is a matter of conjecture whether he would regard Swedenborg as a kindred spirit. There are certainly common links. Both had visions in childhood and in later life; both felt compelled to express what was revealed to them; both recognised the power of the inner spirit; neither was truly interested in the organisational forms of religion. "All religion has relation to life, and the life of religion is to do good', was the way Swedenborg expressed it. Blake would readily endorse this sentiment. William Blake was born in November 1757 which was the year of the Last Judgment in the spiritual realm, and so the beginning of a new age, within the teachings of Swedenborg.[24] This idea had a great impact on Blake's mind for he saw himself as a child of the new age.[25]

In seeking to examine Blake's association with Swedenborgians, consideration must also be given to Blake's openness towards Swedenborg's thought, as expressed in the annotated editions and to his confidant Henry Crabb Robinson. Nor must we ignore the value placed by him on friendship, especially Swedenborgian friends like John Flaxman. Patrons were a necessity for the impoverished Blake, and Swedenborgian patrons like C.A. Tulk were supportive of him and his wife. His purpose in attending the First General Conference of the new Jerusalem Church, London, in 1789 may well have been to find new patrons from among the Swedenborgian gathering. Or it could have been in order to find a spiritual home for himself. But could a restless spirit like Blake ever find a congenial spiritual home except of his own creation? Blake was ever the free man.

To the end of his days Blake had a continuing interest in

Swedenborg's thought, even if he did not fully embrace the formal institution that was established to propagate the teaching of the eighteenth century Swedish scientist, philosopher and theologian. It cannot be denied that Swedenborg the revelator made a lasting impression on Blake the religious and revolutionary poet and artist.

Section 1 : The Blake-Swedenborg Connection

1. The Blakean perspective

2. The Swedenborgian perspective

1. The Blake-Swedenborgian connection

SCHOLARSHIP recognises a relationship between Blake and Swedenborg. The mention of Swedenborg's name within the body of Blake's work acts as confirmation.[1] Examination reveals that this does not mean a total commitment by Blake to the ideas of Swedenborg: but it does demonstrate that Swedenborg's works were considered noteworthy to be read by Blake. Indeed, he goes so far as to recommend other artists to read him for the gain that might accrue to them.[2]

How has the Blakean scholastic world responded and evaluated this connection? And still further, what is rarely presented in discussion on Blake in this regard, how has New Church scholarship responded? Each has approached the matter from its own perspective: neither has given wholehearted support. Legend presents the youthful Blake meeting and conversing with the old gentleman Swedenborg in the London Streets.[3] Myth develops a library of Swedenborgian books in Blake's family home, many of which had not been translated into English at the time they were said to have been read.[4] Unverifiable facts does not stop the unwary, even in the scholarly world, from perpetuating the myth. Authors of popular material find a ready explanation for their interpretation of Blake in the Swedenborgian context, so that many Blakean scholars are embarrassed by their findings. It is often not appreciated that the Swedenborgian scholarly fraternity is not impressed, either, by statements that do not conform to the known evidence. And the growing tendency in New Age ideas, which makes Blake a hero and draws in Swedenborgian teaching, is not helpful to readers if fundamental facts are distorted in order to make a more coherent presentation. Blake did not accept

all things blindly, nor did Swedenborg. Out of respect for both, nor should we.

1. The Blakean perspective

Blakean scholars appear to approach the question of a Swedenborgian influence from three different camps. There are those who would reject any direct influence at all; those who are overwhelmed by the evidence they see in Blake of Swedenborgian ideas; and those taking the middle ground who, weighing the evidence, recognise that Blake did use Swedenborgian ideas along with the ideas of others as he sought to create his own system.

Northrop Frye falls into the first camp. Blake is his own man, so he need not rely on others for inspiration or for the presentation of ideas. He is dismissive of Swedenborg. Blake is the genius who reaches his own conclusions without the help of others. Swedenborg dwells in a 'more rarefied atmosphere'[1]; Blake has his feet on the ground even if his mind may soar into heaven. Blake gained nothing of his artistic ability from Swedenborg's writings: his use of imagination was practical not abstract. Swedenborg is used to bolster his own thinking. Loathing as he does predestination, Blake attacks Swedenborg, not Augustine or Calvin. Any man of mechanical talent could write like Swedenborg, states Blake, so that Frye can comment that he may not be 'so important after all', since Blake insisted 'on the supremacy of painting and poetry'.[2]

S. Foster Damon took much the same line as Frye. He did try to find sources in Swedenborg's work, but his studies have been more discursive with the result that many of his conclusions are face value judgments rather than considered application. His concern was more

for Blake's thoughts. 'Blake considered Swedenborg's visions as the same as Dante's, though Dante was the greater poet'. 'So much in Swedenborg is paralleled in Behmen ... that it is not always possible to say which was Blake's source.'[3]

David Erdman gave the ultimate 'coup de grace' when he demolished the myth of Blake's connection with Swedenborg. He was correct in that much was built on false evidence, but like Kant his article damned Swedenborg in the eyes of many, so that they fail to take Swedenborg seriously.[4] Scholarly speculation does not always advance a study, it can be the means of giving the death blow. Erdman says Blake 'acquired a copy of the 1791 Apocalypse Revealed but read it for laughs'.[5] The scriptural interpretation given by Swedenborg in this work expresses nothing of mirth; 'since every word of it contains mysteries which never could be known without some special enlightenment and consequent revelation' (Preface, Apocalypse Revealed). Nor does the work contain anything to suggest the antics associated with fanatical apocalyptic sects.

G.R. Sabri-Tabrizi seeks Swedenborgian support for Blake's Marriage of Heaven and Hell: but the support may take the form of opposition. His approach is to recognise that both writers are reflecting something of the contemporary social conditions and class structure: thus, the study is set within a social context. There is an apparent sympathy towards Swedenborg, but to 'attempt to identify Blake with Swedenborg or give a metaphysical and apocalyptic interpretation to the works of Blake by abstracting them from their social context' is wrong.[6] In his mind,

> Blake revolted against the whole order of society in defence of human values, as opposed to Swedenborg who attempted to justify and support the position and interest of a leisured class by turning against human

values.[7]

Sabri-Tabrizi would recognise that any criticism Blake might make could not in any way be separated from 'his social criticism'.

Kathleen Raine has consistently acknowledged the influence of Swedenborg on William Blake, even though in her earlier work she recognised the influence of Thomas Taylor also.[8] Her recent studies on Blake reveal her affirmation of the great debt Blake owed to Swedenborg:

> Wonderful as are Blake's poems, his visionary paintings, his aphorisms it is, in essence, the doctrines of Swedenborg that Blake's works embody and to which they lend poetry and eloquence.[9]

She spoke of Blake's Songs as 'Swedenborgian Songs', for she saw in them so much of Swedenborg's teachings, and at the time Blake was much involved both in reading Swedenborg and having association with Swedenborgian friends.[10]

Morton D. Paley presented in 1978 the results of his researches to a seminar at the University of Stockholm; it was published under the title 'A New Heaven is begun: Blake and Swedenborgianism'.[11] This is an overview of the Blake-Swedenborgian connection, and he acknowledges that 'Blake found Swedenborg a figure of unusual interest'.[12] Because Paley takes a sympathetic approach to Swedenborg, this article is required reading for anyone considering the influence of one genius upon another. All available literature at the time was considered, and the facts presented are for the most part correct and accurately interpreted.[13] Paley shows that there is a middle ground to be taken which does not decry the influence of Swedenborg's teachings nor overstate it.

2. The Swedenborgian perspective

The first mention of Blake in New Church literature appears in an editorial note in the New Jerusalem Magazine, pubished in Boston in January 1832. The note was to bring to the attention of readers the unknown artist who was friendly with Flaxman. In England, Allan Cunningham had published his work on the lives of leading British artists, and the editor draws very heavily on this material, as he contrasts Blake with Flaxman, who was known to his readers.

Blake is seen to recognise only parts of Swedenborg and not the whole system. The tenor of the editorial note is that he uses Swedenborg for his own selfish purposes. Blake may be 'pious, virtuous, sincere, and peaceful', but his belief 'in the reality of the spiritual world, and in the actual and personal existence of spirits', led him to wild phantasy, unlike the gentle Flaxman.

The author probably never read Blake's work, and he relied solely on the Cunningham account.[1]

In England the case was different. Dr. Garth Wilkinson published his edition of the Songs of Innocence and of Experience in July 1839. In his preface Wilkinson again turns to Cunningham for the facts of Blake's life, but he is passionate towards Blake's work and thinks his poetry is 'excellent', such that it 'transcended Self, and escaped from the isolation which Self involves'.[2] The two contrary states of the Human Soul are powerfully expressed. Wilkinson comments that the later poetry is not so glowing. He senses that Blake had departed from the 'simplicity' of the Songs to the "fantasies" which 'were fast gaining dominion over him'. And Wilkinson is disturbed that Blake was seeing truth in 'mythological forms' rather than in the 'Divine Human Embodiment of Christianity'.

In 1887 James Spilling published two articles on Blake in the

New Church Magazine.[3] His purpose is to present a better picture of the poet. He states:

> If a man aims at popularity, he must restrict his vision. It is a condition of favouritism with people that a genius must not see too deeply or sing too highly. William Blake did both and the world, as in the case of Swedenborg, declared him mad.[4]

Spilling divides the poetry into two - the Songs and Thel. Spilling is positive in his approach, for of Thel he writes:

> It is an allegory, not strange but familiar; not mystical but crystalline. To understand it, it is only necessary to know that Thel, the mistress of the vales of Har, means beauty that lives for its own sake and seeks no use, but its own pleasure.[5]

It is in these articles by Spilling that the comment of Wilkinson is found that Blake had two approaches to Swedenborg:

> Blake informed Tulk that he had two different states: one in which he liked Swedenborg's writings, and one in which he disliked them. The second was a state of pride in himself, and then they were distasteful to him, but afterwards he knew that he had not been wise and sane. The first was a state of humility, in which he received and accepted Swedenborg.[6]

In 1915 H.N. Morris included a chapter on Blake in his book on well known men of genius who had been influenced by Swedenborg.[7] While he appreciated that many failed to understand Blake's later writings, declaring them to be 'mystical and incomprehensible to most people', this he thought was because they had not studied Swedenborg first. If they first mastered Swedenborg's system of interpretation of Scripture, then Blake's work would be more understandable. Morris believed that Blake had many volumes of the Writings, which have not yet come to light. He believed Blake had a copy of Heaven and Hell, long before the book was found.

James S. Pryke published an article in the American monthly New Church Life, on 'William Blake and the Imagination'. He rejected

the spiritual experience of Blake, as recorded by earlier New Church writers. In his view:

> Vivid, active, fertile in imagination, he undoubtedly was; but he was also self-centred, with all that that word implies...his imagination was permitted to outrun his intelligence...(He) may be ranked as one of the most tragic to be found in English literature. What monuments in verse and line might Blake have left behind...(if) he had accepted the new knowledge that was within his grasp.[8]

Eric A. Sutton also expressed this feeling of regret in his article on 'Swedenborg and Blake', in the New Church Magazine, April-June, 1929. He saw the later poems as Blake's expression of his conviction about the error of Swedenborg's reliance upon reason as the world's hope of salvation. He believed that Blake's lack of interpretive ability in reading Swedenborg led him to misconstrue his teaching. And he noted that the severest critics of Swedenborg admitted that Blake's sweetest poetry was written before his rebellion against Swedenborg. He issued a warning to all readers of Blake:

> At present the New Churchman is prone to exaggerate Blake's indebtedness to Swedenborg, and those who do not know Swedenborg accept uncritically Blake's interpretation of his teaching.[9]

To Sutton's mind, Blake could have left a richer heritage of poetry if he had understood what Swedenborg had to say.

The Swedenborgian perspective shows that Blake took from Swedenborg what was in harmony with his own thinking; and he never rejected the two cardinal principles, that Jesus Christ is God, and that the Bible is the Word of God.

We shall now analyse the full evidence for the Swedenborgian influence on Blake, and try to assess which (if any) of these views comes closest to the truth.

Section 2: Blake's Swedenborgian association

3. Early Swedenborgians

4. The Theosophical Society

5. Distinguished members of the Society

6. Society for the Promoting of the Heavenly Doctrines of the New Jerusalem Church

7. The Sectarian movement 1787-89

8. General Conference, April 1789

9. London Universal Society

10. Swedenborgian Patrons

3. Early Swedenborgianism

EMANUEL SWEDENBORG first came to England in 1710, lodging in London and Oxford. He completed his first foreign tour with a visit to the Continent. He was to make several such tours in his lifetime.[1] In 1710 London was a comparatively new city rising from the ashes, and St. Paul's Cathedral was nearing completion. The young Swede was much impressed with the freedom in writing and speech that he found in England, which was totally different from his experience in his own country.

He visited the best mathematicians and theorists in the forefront of European scientific thought. He called on the Rev. John Flamsteed, director of the observatory in Greenwich. He bought himself scientific instruments. He had an insatiable desire for scientific knowledge and sought out, and wherever possible lodged with, scientists, craftsmen, mathematicians and the like. His brother in law, Dr. Erik Benzelius, desired to know the current opinion on Newton and his newly published theory of gravitation. Swedenborg remarked that it was a vain question to ask because Englishmen were blind when it came to the achievements of their own countrymen. In Oxford he was able to meet Edmund Halley and to visit the noted Bodleian Library. We are not aware that he met the literary figures of the day, but he did read them, saying that they were well worth reading for their imagination alone.[2]

In later years he was to make his home in London so that he could have access to a free press for the publication of his unorthodox theology. On the death of his publisher, John Lewis, his work was printed and published in Amsterdam, with provision being made for the distribution of those volumes in England.[3] There were two English translations made of his Latin works, which Swedenborg had done at his

own expense , namely, the second volume of his Arcana Caelestia (1750), and the Brief Exposition (1769). With the aid of Hyde's Bibliography we are able to trace the publications of Swedenborg and thus to assess the interest shown in them.[4] It begins with personal contacts and leads to various groups, who took to the practice of reading, discussing, translating, printing and publishing his works. Associates of such groups give us the link with Blake's own involvement with the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg.

There is ample reliable documentary evidence of the early period, and a number of interesting connections between these early readers of Swedenborg's works. In his own country there were readers such as Count Hopken, many years Prime Minister to the King of Sweden; Dr. Beyer, Greek Professor and Assessor in the Consistory of Gottenburg; General Tuxon, Commisioner of War at Elsinore; Mr. Carl Robsahm, one of the Superintendents of the bank in Stockholm; Counsellor Sandel, Superintendent of Mines in Sweden; Count Bond and several others. In England readers were also to be found. Stephen Penny of Dartmouth saw the advertisement for the first volume of the Arcana Caelestia in 1749.[5] He must have purchased one of the first half dozen copies to be sold.[6] He read successive volumes. He was so appreciative of the first volume that he wrote to the publisher John Lewis to enquire the name of the author, for the work had been published anonymously.[7] Penny hinted that the author might be Law or Hutchinson[8] The letter was used by Lewis in his next advertisement in the Daily Advertiser of Christmas Day, 1749.[9] Further, Penny wrote to William Law in November 1755, seeking his comments on the Arcana Caelestia and its Swedish author.[10] No doubt as a result of this letter, William Law purchased copies of the Arcana Caelestia.[11] Penny also introduced

William Cookworthy

Swedenborg's work to William Cookworthy, a chemist and practising Quaker from Plymouth, who was a pioneer in the manufacture of porcelain.[12] In 1763 Cookworthy published his own translation of the Doctrine of Life He then introduced the writings of Swedenborg to the Rev. Thomas Hartley, the absentee Rector of Winwick,[13] who translated Influx and published it with a long preface in 1770. Along with Cookworthy he also visited Swedenborg in London. Hartley revised the translation by Cookworthy of the work Heaven and Hell, and this was published in 1778 with a preface by Hartley.[14] A lawyer in Liverpool, Mr. Richard Houghton, read Influx, and was so impressed he corresponded with Hartley. In his turn, Houghton suggested to the Rev. John Clowes, Rector of St. John's, Deansgate, Manchester, that he should read True Christian Religion. John Clowes was a gentleman of eminent piety and learning, who in 1782 instituted the 'Society of Gentlemen' in Manchester, for the sole purpose of translating and publishing the writings of Swedenborg.[15] He himself translated and published the whole of the Arcana Caelestia and the True Christian Religion, as well as producing other original works. He was a respected pastor and it was said of his congregation that they drove up their carriages to 'the gates of heaven', when attending his church. De Quincey said of him, 'He was the most spiritual looking, the most saintly in outward aspect, of all human beings whom I have known throughout life'.[16]

There is a common link with these early readers; they were motivated with visionary inclinations and well versed in the mystics. The most often cited mystics being Boehme and his English disciple William Law. They received Swedenborg's work with enthusiasm, for in them they could find the rational articulation to what they were seeking to understand in the mystics. Penny thought that Law was the author of

Rev. John Clowes

the Arcana Caelestia. Hartley had written at length on mystical topics and in defence of the mystical writers.[17] John Clowes read the mystics and received Swedenborg through his own vision of the Swedenborgian phrase 'Divinum Humanum'.[18]

This was not an age that received the mystics warmly. In a review of Influx in the Monthly Review in 1770, there is condemnation of the work as 'rhapsodical and chimerical', and of Swedenborg as a 'visionary and enthusiast', concluding that 'Baron Swedenborg is to be classed with Jacob Behem, our country-man William Law, and other mystical writers'.[19] The reviewer makes similar remarks in 1772. These reviews were no doubt more widely read than the works of Swedenborg himself. A Swedish visitor to London in 1769 reports on a conversation with some witty Englishmen making derisive comments about the 'New Jerusalem Gentleman'.[20]

Blake not only read, but annotated a number of Swedenborg's works. It was Cookworthy and Hartley's translation of Heaven and Hell, complete with preface and notes, that Blake read in the second edition (1784), printed and published by Robert Hindmarsh. In the preface Hartley reveals Swedenborg's basic proposition concerning history as a series of 'Churches', the image of the spiritual world as that of the 'Grand Man', and the notion of correspondences, between all things of the physical and all things of the spiritual world. Then he concludes with a brief autobiographical letter from Swedenborg, the Answer to a Letter from a Friend, which attests to the moral quality of Swedenborg's life and the authenticity of his visions.[21] In footnotes Hartley also seeks to clarify Swedenborg's meanings, though in the main he gives moral conclusions in relating contemporary illustrations to Swedenborg's work.

John Clowes had been attracted to the True Christian Religion, in which he found the phrase which fascinated him so, Divinum Humanum, and he translated and published this work in 1781. Members of his congregation at St. John's, Deansgate, Manchester, no doubt assisted in the finance involved. His stature as an exponent of Swedenborg's work was growing in the Manchester area. He was able to gather round him the 'Society of Gentlemen', who became the 'Manchester Printing Society', which for some ten years financed the translation of Clowes[22]. The measure of the man may be judged by the fact that he translated the massive work, Arcana Caelestia, which in the English translation runs into twelve volumes, as well as many other works. Two other volumes published by the Manchester Printing Society that Blake possesed and annotated were Divine Love and Wisdom (1788) and Divine Providence (1790). The translator was Dr. Nathaniel Tucker, of Hull, who prepared tables of contents and a brief statement about the problems of translation. Divine Providence contained the preface written by Clowes about the contemporary attitude towards providence, which Blake noted in his annotations as evidence of 'Priestcraft'.[23]

In the brief annotation that Blake made to his copy of Heaven and Hell, reference is made to 'Worlds in Universe'. The annotation is referring to Earths in the Universe, which Clowes translated and which was published by the Manchester Printing Society in 1787.[24] Blake's own copy of this work has not yet come to light. Another work which Blake mentions is the True Christian Religion. In the Descriptive Catalogue, plate number eight, which was published in 1809, we read 'This subject is taken from the Visions of Emanuel Swedenborg, Universal Theology, No. 623'. The subtitle to the True Christian Religion is 'Universal Theology of the New Church'. This shows that

Blake had read the work, and this would be the Clowes translation of 1781. But again, Blake's copy of this work has not come to light, nor has the related drawing, which is mentioned in the Descriptive Catalogue.

In conversation with Henry Crabb Robinson Blake remarked, concerning Swedenborg, that 'his sexual religion is dangerous'. Does this comment suggest that Swedenborg's Conjugial Love had been read by Blake? The first English translation of Conjugial Love was done by the Rev. John Clowes in 1794, and issued by the Manchester Printing Society. This is another work by Swedenborg which is not extant, with Blake's signature or annotations. Extracts from the work Conjugal Love appeared in serial form attached to the monthly instalments of New Jerusalem Magazine for 1790, published by the London Universal Society. Blake would have access to this publication through his Swedenborgian connections. However, the subject of concubinage is not found in the extracts in the magazine, so if [Swedenborg's] sexual religion is dangerous' refers to this matter, then Blake must have heard it from other Swedenborgians. He would be aware that several members were expelled from the East Cheap Society between 4th May 1789 and the 11th April 1790, on account of the understanding and interpretation given to the concubinage passages in Conjugial Love.

The Rev. John Clowes gave the title Conjugial Love to his translation of Swedenborg's Delitiae sapientiae de Amore conjugiali. Prior to Clowes' translation the work was known as Conjugal Love.

4. The Theosophical Society

Robert Hindmarsh was a printer by trade. Later he was to become a Master Printer and publisher, with a royal appointment to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. Hindmarsh was the instigator of the Theosophical Society, and instrumental in the movement which led to sectarianism and the First General Conference of the New Church in 1789.

He had come to hear of Swedenborg through association with James Phillips, a Quaker, who was the printer of Cookworthy's edition of Heaven and Hell. Hindmarsh's employer at the time was Josiah Collier, an acquaintance of Phillips', and it was common in conversation at the table for the name of Swedenborg to be mentioned.[1] This was in 1778. On New Year's Day, 1782, he was visiting his father, James Hindmarsh, in Canterbury, who at that time was a preacher with the Wesleyan Methodists. The conversation turned to Swedenborg, and James took his son the next day to see a Quaker by the name of George Keen, who possessed a number of Swedenborg's works. Robert Hindmarsh borrowed Influx and Heaven and Hell, and became from that time on an avid reader, 'and instantly perceived their contents to be of heavenly origin'.[2]

In London, Robert Hindmarsh sought out readers of Swedenborg and in 1783 invited them to hold regular meetings on Sunday morning, in his home in Clerkenwell, for reading and conversation on these works. At the first meeting there were Mr. Peter Provo, an Apothecary, Mr. William Bonington, a Clock-maker, and Hindmarsh. Later, John Augustus Tulk, a gentleman of independent property, was to join them.

The group set about the calling of a public meeting. This first public meeting was fixed at the London Coffee House, Ludgate Hill, at 5 p.m. on the 5th December, 1783. Since no private room could be

Rev. Robert Hindmarsh

found for them, they adjourned to the nearby Queen's Arms Tavern, and 'drank tea together'. Present were the aforementioned and William Spence, a surgeon.[3] Mr. Henry Peckitt, a retired Apothecary, went to the London Coffee House, only to find that the company had moved on without leaving word of their whereabouts at the bar. They met the following Thursday in Chambers in the Inner Temple, Fleet Street. Their advertisement brought in Mr. James Glenn, a Scottish gentleman who was about to settle in Demerara, South America. Also present was the Rev. Joshua Gilpin, who was subsequently engaged as a curate by the Rev. John Fletcher, Vicar of Madeley, Shropshire,[4] and Mr. Henry Peckitt, who had missed the previous meeting. Peckitt had taken the trouble to visit Mr. Shearsmith, a barber, in Bath Street, Cold Bath Fields, where Swedenborg had lodged.[5]

In January 1784 the small group began to meet in New Court, Middle Temple, and formed themselves into the Theosophical Society. Their purpose was the promoting of the Heavenly Doctrines of the New Jerusalem. Their intention was the 'translating, printing and publishing of the theological writings of Emanuel Swedenborg'. To increase their membership and the knowledge of their aims, they distributed invitation cards to those attending the Handel Musical Festival in Westminster Abbey during May and June, 1784. Of the support the Society received, Hindmarsh expressed it thus:

> The news of such an association (the Theosophical Society) soon spread in the Metropolis and our numbers began to increase. Gentlemen of respectability found their way to our meetings, and cordially united with us in the objects of the Society. Among these were several persons of distinguished reputation for talent and merit in their several professions.[6]

In a footnote, Hindmarsh then gives details of those who attended the meetings, concluding with the words: 'Besides many others, now deceased,

whose names are not recollected - R.H.'.[7] A further three names are added by the editor, Rev. Edward Madeley.[8] All the names given can be presumed to be accurate.[9] The Society began in January 1784 and by 1787 the group was beginning to disintegrate because of the sectarian issue. Thus it must be surmised that the individuals mentioned in the Hindmarsh list attended one or more meetings of the Society.

The meetings were held on Sunday and Thursday evening in a most convivial atmosphere. There were readings in Latin by George Adams and Hindmarsh from Apocalypse Revealed, and in English translation from Influx, Heaven and Hell and True Christian Religion. Hindmarsh records the meetings as follows:

> The conversation, to which these interesting subjects gave rise, and in which each member took a part, was in the highest degree animated and delightful; and tended, in an extraordinary degree, to unite us together in the bonds of mutual affections and charity. In many respects the Society might have been compared to the Primitive Christians. Sincerity, simplicity, and an earnest desire to communicate to others those spiritual advantages, which we ourselves enjoyed, were distinguishing features in all our meetings, which were conducted with an order and harmony truly gratifying.[10]

The group did not propound any particular interpretation of the Writings, but simply desired their circulation and study. In this way the Society catered for all shades of thought; those who saw Swedenborg as a 'mystical writer' alongside men like Boehme and Law, and others who saw the beginnings of an institutional New Church on earth. But above all, interest in the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg was paramount, not any religious affiliation.

The Society sponsored translations and cooperated with the Manchester Printing Society in their ventures also. But of special note to the London group, was the possession by its members of many manuscripts of Swedenborg's yet unpublished works. These had been brought to London

in 1783. Among the manuscripts was the Latin edition of Apocalypse Explained, which was to be published in four volumes between 1785-89. The cost was shared by the editors, Peckitt, Spence, Adams, Chastanier and Hindmarsh; eventually Peckitt assumed the whole cost himself. Hindmarsh, at his own expense, issued a Latin edition of the Hieroglyphic Key (Clavis Hieroglyphica) in 1784. Among the documents were also the Spiritual Diary, and Swedenborg's indices to the Arcana Caelestia and the Apocalypse Revealed.[11]

At some point in 1785 the scope of the Society was widened, with a world-wide distribution of their publication and 'correspondents in Scotland, Ireland, France, Holland, Germany, Sweden, Denmark, Russia, Poland, North and South America, the West India Islands, the East Indies, and other distant parts of the globe'.[12] This caused a new view to be taken of the Society. At an extraordinary general meeting on 22nd August, 1785, we find the name being changed to 'The British Society for the Propogation of the Doctrines of the New Church'. This enabled foreign members to be admitted, among whom were Pierre Gosse and William Gomm. C.F.Nordenskjöld suggests that the change was caused by the Marquis de Thome, who objected to the term 'theosophical' and desired instead 'philanthropic'.[13] The old name did linger on in use after 1785, but the new sense of internationalism suggests that the time might well be drawing near when the bold step could be taken towards separatism, and so declare the manifestation of the New Church in an institutional form. But this was not yet: several more years were to pass before Hindmarsh and his associates called the First General Conference.

Blake held the same sentiments as many of those who attended the Theosophical Society. Some were known to him personally. Although there is no record of his having attended a meeting of the Society, since much

of the Society's activities are gathered from Hindmarsh's Rise and Progress of the New Jerusalem Church, his personal friendship with some of the members and his subsequent attendance at the First General Conference of the New Church, which arose directly from the Theosophical Society, would suggest an occasional visit at least. Blake makes reference, in an annotation to Divine Love and Wisdom, to some comment made 'in the society'.[14] This could be the Theosophical Society, which at its earlier meetings was freer in the exchange of thought arising from the study of Swedenborg's writings, and less dogmatic than was the case when the Society gave way to the General Conference.

An examination will be made of several members, found in Hindmarsh's list of members, who could have an association with Blake. Reference will also be made to several persons who were not members of the Society, but had close association with those who were. Blake had association also with a number of these. The full list appears in Appendix D, showing those interested in the writings of Swedenborg, some of whom did not necessarily become members of the organised New Church, as established in April 1790.

5. Distinguished members of the Theosophical Society

Who introduced Blake to the writings of Swedenborg? Erdman has shown convincingly that we can dismiss the thought of his being steeped in a Swedenborgian home.[1] The family home may well have been the foundation of his revolutionary ideas, for the merchant classes readily accepted the independent spirit. His father was a dissenter, which again points to freedom of thought in matters of religion.[2] Blake would find this congenial to his own spirit of independence and revolutionary ideas. But evidence, if it is to be found, for Blake's first contact with Swedenborgian thought, must rest on Blake's own interest and his circle of friends. Such then points to the Theosophical Society.

A number of his friends were members of the Society. A number of his patrons espoused the Swedenborgian cause, and it was the common Swedenborgian link that brought him to their notice. How would he come to receive an invitation to attend the First General Conference of the New Church, if it had not been that he was known to be interested in Swedenborg's ideas?

There is no recorded evidence of Blake's first contact with Swedenborgian thought, either in his own letters, those of friends, or his faithful recorder Henry Crabb Robinson. But scattered evidence can be found of Swedenborgian association. His friends William Sharp and John Flaxman, engraver and sculptor respectively, were members of the Theosophical Society and could equally have shared their religious feelings and ideas with Blake.

Blake's name may not appear on the list of members of the Theosophical Society, but then others are equally missing who are known to have been members. For instance, Charles Frederick de Nordenskjöld

is not found on the list, though his brother Augustus signed the Conference Minutes. In correspondence with Dr. Emmanuel Tafel, C.F.Nordenskjöld speaks of being associated with the Society, says he modelled his own Philanthropic Society in Sweden on the London model, and supplied the Society with many manuscripts on loan from the Swedish Academy of Sciences.[3] Such suggests more than an occasional visit, yet his name is missing from the Society list of members.[4] Could the same apply to Blake?

Another person who could have impressed Blake, though he was not a member of the Theosophical Society either, was the Rev. Jacob Duché. He had fled from America and was living in London. His interest in Swedenborgian thought was such that he opened his home for discussion meetings. This appears to have been at the same time as the Theosophical Society were holding discussion meetings. Hindmarsh states that several members, including himself, went along to the Duché group. Further, members of the Society also attended services of worship conducted by Mr. Duché at the Asylum Chapel, St. George's Fields, Lambeth. The gatherings were running in tandem with the Society's meetings. When Duché published his Discourses on Sacred Subjects in 1779 several of the names of the Society's membership were subscribers. Blake himself was a subscriber. William Sharp, a friend of Blake, was responsible for the preparation of Duché's work for the press.

If it is impossible to give details of when first Blake came into contact with early Swedenborgians, except in his attendance at the First General Conference of the New Church, there is much to confirm his strong links with members of the Theosophical Society. The chances are that he himself attended such a meeting sometime prior to the calling of the invitation to the General Conference. There is a curious mention of

a discussion at a 'Society' meeting, which is found in Blake's annotations to Divine Love and Wisdom. Blake writes:

> Is it not false then, that love recieves influx thro' the understanding, as was asserted in the society.[5]

The subject under discussion is the elevation of love or will into the heat of heaven; as the previous paragraph had discussed the elevation of the understanding into the light of heaven; in part it reads:

> the love or will is elevated into the heat of heaven, and the understanding into the light of heaven; and if both are elevated, a marriage of them takes place there, and is called the heavenly marriage, because it is the marriage of heavenly love and wisdom.

Swedenborg is showing that both the love and wisdom within a man can be elevated into the heavenly sphere, but it can only remain there when there is a 'marriage' of will and understanding, love and wisdom.

Blake's reference would suggest that the matter had been discussed at a Society meeting, and the conclusion reached was not that which he gathered from his reading of the paragraph. There are no records of subjects discussed, or records taken of the proceedings of the Theosophical Society.

If on this evidence, we accept that Blake did attend a meeting, if not several meetings of the Society, then included in our discussions will be those members whom Blake could have met, who themselves may not have been recorded as members of the Theosophical Society.

John Flaxman(1755-1826)

John Flaxman was a sculptor of note, a well known and highly respected and distinguished member of the Royal Academy. Although he did not attend the First General Conference, for at the time he was in Italy, he was a reader of Swedenborg and a member of the Theosophical Society established by Robert Hindmarsh.

In 1810 Flaxman was created Professor of Sculpture at the Academy, from which institute he had received his early training. Much of the fame of the Wedgwood pottery was the result of the labours of the young Flaxman.[1] Blake addresses him as 'dear sculptor of eternity',[2] which reflects something of the high esteem in which he was held. Flaxman befriended Blake, and sought to secure patrons for him.

Flaxman's association with Blake appears to have begun in the 1780s. George Cumberland and Thomas Stothard who equally were to befriend Blake, often went sailing with Flaxman. Writing some seventy years after the event, Stothard's daughter in law, describes an expedition up the Medway, around September 1780, when they were accompanied by their old friend 'Mr. Ogleby and Blake, that amiable, eccentric and greatly gifted artist, who produced so many works indicative of a high order of genius, and sometimes no less of an unsound mind'.[3]

Writing to his wife Nancy, on June 18th 1783, Flaxman mentions meeting a man about their own age:

> Mr. Hawkins paid me a visit & at my desire has employed Blake to make him a capital drawing for whose advantage in consideration of his great talents he seems desirous to employ his utmost interest.[4]

Nancy's reply is: 'I rejoice for Blake'. The 'capital drawing' cannot be traced today.[5] While he was an apprentice to Basire, between 1771 and 1777, Blake was writing poems. These he often read or sang to his

friends. Flaxman was so impressed that he approached Mrs. Harriet Mathew, the wife of the Rev. A.S.Mathew, to assist in the publication of these poems. So the Poetical Sketches saw the light of day in printed form. In the Advertisement, the Rev. Mr. Mathew writes:

> The following sketches were the production of untutored youth, commenced in his twelfth, and occasionally resumed by the author till his twentieth year; some which time his talents having been wholly directed to the attainment of excellence in his profession.[6]

It is to be noted that Blake did not show much interest, joy or delight in the little volume. He virtually put no effort into having the uncut and unsewn sheets made up into a volume for publication, and so sold to the general public. He may well have bound copies for distribution to his friends. In the Spring of 1784 the Flaxmans were busy spreading Blake's poetic reputation. A copy of Poetical Sketches inscribed 'from Mrs. Flaxman May 15 1784', was made more valuable by Blake's transcription of 'of three pastoral 'Songs' that have not survived in this form elsewhere'.[7]

Blake attended with Flaxman and others the literary evening given by Mrs. Harriet Mathew, and sometimes he sang his poems to the assembled company. Mrs. Mathew gave her support not only to poets, but musicians and artists; she patronised Oram, Loutherbourg's pupil. Loutherbourg was a member of the Theosophical Society. John Thomas Smith can write:

> I became acquainted with Mrs. Mathew and her son. At the lady's most agreeable conversations I first met William Blake, the artist,[8] to whom she and Mr. Flaxman had been truly kind.

He goes on to state that in return for the many favours shown to Flaxman by the Mathew family, Flaxman decorated their library 'with models, I think they were in putty and sand'.[9]

Flaxman equally commended Blake to Josiah Wedgwood and William

Rev. Joseph Proud

Hayley, the pottery manufacture and the popular poet respectively. 'Flaxman, who had designed some crockery for Josiah Wedgwood, secured the services of Blake for engraving the pieces in the catalogue'.[10] In a letter to Halley, dated April 26th 1784, Flaxman writes:

> I have left a Pamphlet of Poems with Mr. Long, which he will transmit to Eastham, they are the writings of a Wm. Blake you have heard me mention, his education will plead sufficient cause to your liberal mind for the defects of his work.[11]

It could be that Flaxman was hoping through Hayley's influence for a subscription list to be prepared, the sum of which might enable Blake to travel. However this did not happen, though this same letter hints that Mr. Hawkins might well defray the cost of such travel. There is no record of Blake ever travelling abroad. Two of Blake's drawings were to appear in the catalogue of the Royal Academy for May 1784.

Blake had worked for Joseph Johnson since 1780, and when Flaxman went to Italy, Blake had the opportunity of meeting Fuseli. Fuseli and Flaxman were great friends, and they often spoke in terms of commendation about the work of Blake.[12]

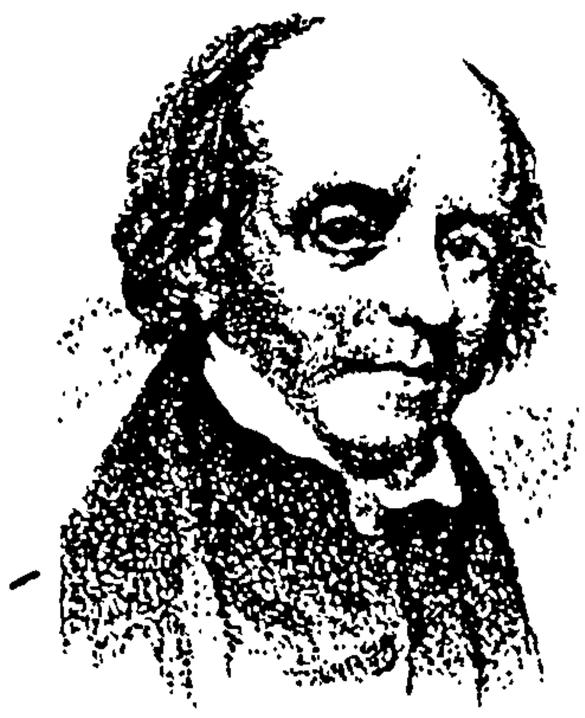
It is possible, with Flaxman in Italy, that Blake attended the General Conference of the New Church in order to secure new patrons. Through his own growing interest in the works of Emanuel Swedenborg, Blake may have been hoping to interest other Swedenborgians in his work.

John Flaxman could well have been the one who first introduced Blake to Swedenborgian thought. There is a long association of the two men in the 1780s, and certainly Flaxman did go out of his way to help Blake.

When the New Church Society was founded in Cross Street, Hatton Garden , under the ministry of the Rev. Joseph Proud, Flaxman was an active member of the Church Committee.[13] Later, on the formation of the

London Printing Society in 1810 he became a loyal supporter until his death in 1826. This Society was the forerunner of the present day Swedenborg Society.

Self portrait :. Flaxman as a young man



John Flaxman

Rev. Jacob Duché (1737-1798)

The Rev. Jacob Duché was not a member of the Theosophical Society but he had association with many of its members, and a Swedenborgian group met weekly in his home during the 1780's.[1] He had been a popular preacher in Philadelphia. His contemporary, the Rev. Dr. William White, wrote of him:

> A remarkably fine voice and graceful action helped to render him very popular as a preacher... A few years after his ministerial settlement he took to the mysticism of Jacob Behmen and William Law. In England he became a convert to the opinions of Baron Swedenborg;[2] and in these he continued until his decease.

In 1774 and 1775 Duché was appointed chaplain to the Continental Congress. In a letter dated September 16th 1774, John Adams, the Second President of the United States, comments:

> Mr. Duché is one of the most ingenious men, the best characters, and greatest preachers, in the Episcopal order, on this continent[3] - yet a zealous friend of liberty and his country.

Duche was appointed chaplain to the first Congress of the new nation in 1776. But much like the 'Vicar of Bray' he was concerned for his future in the Anglican Church and thought it wise to express his loyalty to the King. When the British army approached Philadelphia in September 1777 he prayed for the King, and was subsequently arrested. Ten days after his release from prison he sent a letter to George Washington on October 1777, urging him to surrender and resume his allegiance to the Crown. The result was banishment, and at the close of December 1777, Duché sailed from Philadelphia to England, where he remained until 1792.

In 1779 Blake subscribed to Duché's Discourses, an edition of his sermons. It is safe to assume, therefore, that Blake was aware of the man and the problems he had in America. By the late 1780s Duché was

to become a prominent member in London of Swedenborgian circles. Blake's friends, Flaxman and Sharp were known to Duché, and it is possible that Blake may have attended Duché's meetings.

From 1778 to 1782 Duché conducted a casual ministry in and around the Metropolis, supported no doubt by many of the subscribers to his Discourses. In 1781 he preached before the Humane Society, and was associated with other charitable institutions. On July 1st 1782 he was appointed Chaplain and Secretary of the Asylum for Female Orphans in St. George's Fields, Lambeth, London.

Hindmarsh reports that in the Asylum Chapel, Duché's preaching gave evident proof of his attachment to Swedenborg's doctrine, but only 'with great caution'.[4] Members of the Theosophical Society, including Hindmarsh, attended his Sunday services and the meetings held in his home to discuss Swedenborg and other mystical writers. A visitor to the group around 1786 was Francis Dobbs, who describes his experience in A Concise View of History and Prophecy.[5]

Both Hindmarsh and Dobbs give us evidence that between 1784 and 1787 as many as thirty people attended the regular meetings at Duché's home, including members of the Theosophical Society who still continued to meet in the Inner Temple. So we see Duché emerging not only as a reader of Swedenborg, but a leader in the popularization of his thought through the sponsorship of these large and regular meetings.

Another document which shows close association of Duché with the early Swedenborgians is his article on "The New Jerusalem Church" which he contributed to Bishop Hurd's New and Universal History of the Religious Rites and Ceremonies of all Nations of the World.[6] The article sketches Swedenborg's life, with a listing and sympathetic summary of his writings and doctrines. Duche also notes the weekly

meetings that are held in the Middle Temple, and refers his readers to Hindmarsh and the address of his publishing house. Duché uses the term 'New Jerusalem Church' to express the Swedenborgian view of the new spiritual enlightenment. He comments that the believers of Swedenborg had not formed themselves into a separate religious sect. This confirms a date for publication prior to 1787 when Hindmarsh and a minority from the Theosophical Society formed a sectarian Swedenborgian institution.

In an obituary notice of Ester Duche Hill, the following appears in reference to Jacob Duché:

> he had a complete set of the Writings, in the original, in his library, before he left America, though at the time he was quite ignorant of the nature of them, or the treasures they contained, till his attention was afterwards drawn to them, chiefly through his personal intimacy with the Rev. Mr. Hartley and the Rev. Mr. Clowes, when he finally became a most cordial and devout recipient of them.[7]

The Rev. Thomas Hartley was a subscriber to Duché's Discourses. The Rev. John Clowes invited Duche to preach in his Church in Manchester, and was a friend of the Duché family. There is a binding thread in the careers of these three clergymen. Duché, Hartley and Clowes were all priests in the Anglican Church; they all developed an interest in Behmen and Law; they were enthusiastic in expressing their mystical tendencies; they were all educated at Cambridge; they all became admirers of Swedenborg; yet they all chose to remain within the Anglican Church, and to regard Swedenborg as an inspired visionary rather than a founder of a new religious institution.

John Clowes held weekly meetings in Manchester, similar to those of Duché in London; these were for the discussion of Swedenborg's thought and doctrines. Clowes was also prepared to travel around Manchester talking to enthusiastic groups of readers of Swedenborg. There was such a group in Bolton, and it is recorded that on one

occasion the Rev. Jacob Duché addressed this group.[8] There is evidence that at least on one occasion at St. John's Church Duché was the preacher "to a crowded audience!"[9] Further evidence of their personal relationship can be seen in the letters Clowes addressed to Duché's married daughter. Further, Duché's involvement both in Manchester and London can be seen in the anonymous preface which he wrote for Swedenborg's Doctrine of Life, translated by Clowes and printed by Hindmarsh in 1786. The preface reflects Duché's pietistic inclinations, and he argues for openness to new ideas, though he does not commit himself wholeheartedly to the exclusive importance of Swedenborg's ideas.

Although Duché expressed a desire to return to America in 1783, in a letter he wrote to Washington, the laws enforcing his banishment continued until 1789, and he did not return to America until 1792.

There is no evidence of Blake's direct contact with Duché, at least nothing so far has come to light; but his early interest in Duché's Discourses suggests that he would be aware of Duché's activities during the 1780s. Blake's friend Flaxman would be aware of Duche through his support of the Theosophical Society, and may well have attended Sunday Services as well as the Duché discussion group, and he could well have shared his own thoughts on the matter with Blake. There is intimacy between Flaxman and Blake in the 1780s. Another associate of Flaxman and Blake was Sharp. Conversation can be inferred between Sharp and Blake.[10] Sharp was involved in the preparation of Duché's Discourses in 1779, and he could have commended it to Blake. Sharp was personally connected with Duché's only son, Thomas Spence Duché, who also was involved in Swedenborgian activities in London. This young man, who died in 1790 at the age of twenty-one years, was a pupil of

Benjamin West, and his portrait of Bishop Seabury was engraved by Sharp in 1786.[11]

Rev. Jacob Duché

A visitor to Duché's circle in January 1793 was William Hayley, who composed on the spot 'A Hymn, sung by the Orphans of the Asylum'.[12] Hayley was later to become a patron of Blake.

Benedict Chastanier (1739-1816)

Benedict Chastanier was a French Surgeon educated at the College of St. Barbe, Paris.[1] After several lengthy visits to England before 1744, he finally emigrated and took up residence in 1763. He was an avid reader of the 'mystical writers'. In England he joined the Duche circle and also became an active member of the Theosophical Society. In 1788 Wadstrom visited London and deposited a number of Swedenborg's manuscripts with Chastanier, who translated a number of these into French. He attended the First General Conference of the New Church, and signed the Minutes.

He was interested in cabbalistic writers, and read Boehme and Law, and came across the English translation of Swedenborg's Arcana Caelestia volume 2. In 1776 he enquired at a bookshop in Holborn for a copy of De Signatura Rerum. The bookseller could not supply him with a copy, but instead recommended Influx, which was Hartley's translation of Swedenborg's De Commercio Animae et Corporis. He noted the author was Swedenborg. He had, since 1768, wished to see the learned Swedish gentleman, and was to have been in the party, arranged by Robert Peacock, to see Swedenborg at his lodging in London, in July or August, 1769. Unfortunately Chastanier was engaged on professional duty at the time, and when he was able to enquire of the visit, the interview was dismissed in the words, 'It is an old fool, who pretends to keep angels and spirits in bottles'.[2] Chastanier regretted not having made a personal visit himself, and confirmed for himself the state of mind of Emanuel Swedenborg.

In 1776 a circular was issued in the name of a 'Society of Gentlemen', later to be called the 'Universal Society for the Promotion

of the New Jerusalem'. The proposal contained in the circular was the issuing by subscription the translation of Swedenborg's works, done by Chastanier. He placed an advertisement in a public paper inviting those interested in Swedenborg's work to meet at his home, 62 Tottenham Court Road.

In 1760 a Masonic lodge was formed in Avignon, using the tenets of Swedenborg. At much the same time a Society of Illuminati was established in the city by Pernety and Grabianka. Pernety had edited a French translation of Heaven and Hell. Chastanier, himself a mason, established a new order in the masonic rites, which he introduced into England. In 1770 Pernety also introduced further modification to the Avignon rites. In 1783 the Marquis de Thome is said to have accomplished a restoration of the Society of Illuminati at Avignon, to bring in Swedenborg's teaching concerning six degrees.

In 1785 Grabianka, a Polish Count, came to England with the purpose of visiting Benedict Chastanier. He was introduced to members of the Theosophical Society, and attended the Duché circle. Hindmarsh says he was a 'frequent and welcome visitor" to the home of Jacob Duché. It transpires that Duché's son, Thomas Spence, had been associated with the Illuminati in Avignon. Grabianka seems to have given the impression that his group in Avignon were superior to that organised by Hindmarsh, and if they wished the Theosophical Society could be associated with them.[3]

Two other members, William Bryan and John Wright, visited London after hearing of Swedenborg's writings in Yorkshire. They also set off to Avignon. Chastanier had sent a letter of introduction to the Illuminati, ahead of the two travellers. They stayed for seven months, chiefly spent in reading and copying mysterious prophecies. Some five

years later, in 1794 they emerged as avid proselytizers for Richard Brothers, and had brought along with them William Sharp. Wright's book contains an imprimatur of Richard Brothers, who concurred with the assessment of the Avignon prophecies, which is couched in words similar to those used by Swedenborg himself in True Christian Religion.

> I inform you that I am instructed by revelation from the Lord to desire you to publish, for the benefit of all nations, the revealed knowledge, communicated to the society at Avignon, of which you and William Bryan, his servants, were members.[4]

William Sharp who was friendly with the Duché family tried to persuade William Blake to join the cause of Richard Brothers, and Flaxman was to have acted as architect of Brothers 'Promised Land', but Sharp was unable to persuade him either. Subsequently Sharp was to become a leading supporter of Joanna Southcott. Morton Paley has drawn attention to the acquaintance of Blake and the radical millenarian view of Bryan and Wright, in his 'William Blake, The Prince of the Hebrews, and the Woman Clothed with the Sun'.[5] The Book of Revelation ever proves to be one in which the shadows of history can be found, and the future hopes revealed. The subject matter of the book fascinated Blake and Chastanier alike, and there are interesting parallels.

Chastanier issued a book, written as if from Swedenborg and addressed to 'Sons of Liberty, Children of the Freeborn Woman'. The title was Emanuel Swedenborg's New-Year's Gift to His Readers for MDCXCI. In this work Swedenborg denies that he "asserted the eternity of Hell's punishments". He also denied predestination stating 'Essential Love's unbounded power to rescue even the deepest hell". A comment is also made on the developments in France, namely, 'kind Providence has left a door wide open for the TRUTHS OF THE KINGDOM to enter in and to establish itself with all possible or even desirable

liberty, in spiritual matters'. There is also a translation by Chastanier of what he calls Swedenborg's 'Diary of Memorable Relations', a manuscript in his possession. This was subsequently to be published by other translators and revisors as The Spiritual Diary. Chastanier also submitted a number of passages in translation for inclusion in the New Jerusalem Magazine. The account from the Diary relating to the fall of an angel, bears striking resemblance to Blake's later account of passing through a Vortex in Milton.[6] Blake writes:

> The nature of infinity is this: That every thing has its
> Own Vortex, and when once a traveller thro' Eternity
> Has pass'd that Vortex, he percieves it roll backward behind
> His path, into a globe itself infolding like a sun,
> Or like a moon, or like a universe of starry majesty,
> While he keeps onwards in his wondrous journey on the earth,
> Or like a human form, a friend with (with) whom he liv'd
> benevolent.

Chastanier's translation runs as follows:

> There first appears a folding-up, as it were, of a veil round the head, at a certain distance: by the Angel's whirling about, the veil is flying up, even as I have seen it somewhere represented in some pictures. Presently the folding-up becomes swifter and swifter, until the whole veil appears upwards; but by his swift whirling about there appears as a sphere of an horizontal winding, such as is the sphere of the circulating atmosphere, and that went from right to left ... The veil thus formed into such a sphere, another that stood close by him, took hold of it, as it were; then the sphere of the veil unfolded itself in a contrary direction, so that it was unfolded from the veil, and was lessened; yet it lasted pretty long from the peripheries to the central place where he stood; and while it came close by him, he fell backwards into a black pool, very filthy, until the Lord delivered him from thence (page 18).[7]

There are similarities in the two statements with the change of state taking place as the subject passes from 'whirling about' or 'Vortex' to

see it become a 'sphere' or 'globe'. From both passages there is the impression that the whole process winds itself up again in order to be repeated.

In the June isue of the New Jerusalem Magazine for 1790 there is a translation of a letter written by Swedenborg dated 30th April 1770, which in part reads as follows:

> I go next June to Amsterdam, where I intend to publish the Universal Theology of the New Church; the worship of the Lord is the foundation therein, and if upon that foundation the true house or temple shall not be built, others will erect upon it Pupanaria or brothels.[8]

The implied thought is very similar to a statement in the 'Proverbs of Hell' in Blake's The Marriage of Heaven and Hell;

> Prisons are built with stones of Law. Brothels with bricks of Religion.[9]

Blake may well have been a subscriber to the New Jerusalem Magazine for 1790. He may also have bought some of the translation by Chastanier of the Swedenborg manuscripts in his possession. In 1795 Chastanier was to publish A Word of Advice to a Benighted World, in which the prophet Richard Brothers is rejected and the Avignon Society is denounced as 'the Synagogue of Satan'. This phrase is found in the Book of Revelation 2.9 and 3.9 and is a term used by Blake in The Four Zoas and in Milton.

Charles Frederick de Nordenskjöld (1756-1828)

Although the name of C.F.Nordenskjöld[1] does not appear on the list of members of the Theosophical Society as prepared by Robert Hindmarsh, his association with many of the members of that Society cannot be in doubt. In a letter to Dr. Emanuel Tafel, dated 27th February 1822, which Tafel himself cites in his letter to the New Jerusalem Magazine, we find Nordenskjöld making reference to many of the early readers of Swedenborg's Writings in Sweden, and his own association with the 'Philanthropic Society'[2] in London. He states:

> During my residence in London in the years 1783, 1784, 1785, and 1786, I was a member of the Philanthropic Society, which had for its end the publishing of the theological works of this author, (illustrious in the eyes of every true Christian), both in Latin and English. On returning to Stockholm, I established myself a similar society, which had some success.[3]

In a further letter to Tafel, dated 1st May 1822, and again cited by Tafel, reference is made to various members of the Theosophical Society. He also states that he brought over with him from Sweden the Apocalypsis Explicata, and gave it to Dr. William Spence of the Society. Spence supported Nordenskjöld during his long stay in London.[4] Other posthumous manuscripts he passed on to Spence and these were said to appear in the 'catalogue' of the Society.

C.N.Nordenskjöld was a linguist and held a government post in Sweden.[5] He was introduced to 'the Writings' by his older brother Augustus, who attended the First General Conference of the New Church at which William and Catherine Blake were present. The purpose of his visit to London, besides handing on the manuscript of Apocalypsis Explicata, and no doubt the news of his brother and his work towards the 'mysterium magnum', was that of seeking to know more of the politics of

England. He was also interested in collecting as much information as possible on Swedenborg. He was responsible for getting Robsahm to write his 'Memoirs concerning Swedenborg';[6] and he sought anecdotes from Beyer, as well as approaching the wife of the gardener Swedenborg had employed.[7] Material that he collected in this way concerning Swedenborg, he translated into French and sent to Abbé Pernety, who included it as an introduction in his French edition of Heaven and Hell.

He also published several magazines. Associated with the Exegetic-Philanthropic Society was "Samilingar for Philantroper' (Magazine for Philanthropists); a year later in 1788 he published a weekly political and literary journal called 'Medborgaren' (The Citizen), in which he introduced many of Swedenborg's doctrines. Later he produced 'Allmanna Magazinet' (The Public Magazine); but publication was forbidden and the entire edition confiscated and burned by order of the king. After 1793 he appeared to have taken little active interest in the New Church. But in 1819 he published 'Considérations Générales sur le Christianisme Actuel et la Lumière que M.E. Svédenborg répand sur les Relgions.' This book, of which a continuation appears in 1824, contained many important documents concerning Swedenborg and the early history of the New Church. In the later part of his life he found a congenial friend in Dr. Emanuel Tafel of Tubingen, and their extensive correspondence on the doctrine and history of the New Church was published in German by Tafel. [8]

Blake would no doubt be drawn to some of the ideas of Nordenskjöld, even if they never met, for there is no record of their ever meeting. Nordenskjöld had a plan for a free community in West Africa, which was in effect to create a New Jerusalem in Africa.[9] Blake was sympathetic to the cause of freedom for slaves. His poem "The

Little Black Boy' shows his sense of the equality of the races before God:

> And I am black, but O! my soul is white
> ...
> Ill shade him from the heat till he can bear,
> To lean in joy upon our fathers knee.
> And then Ill stand and stroke his silver hair,
> And be like him and he will then love me.

Nordenskjöld was expelled, along with others from the East Cheap Society in 1789, for his ideas on free love, based on Swedenborgian principles.[10] Blake was fascinated by the whole subject, though there is a sense in which sexual love was not always envisaged by him in his poems. In the summer of 1790, following his expulsion, Nordenskjöld went to Paris and took part in the Revolutionary festivities, to the point of dancing on the ruins of the Bastille.[11] Blake's own sense of revolutionary fervour would find in Nordenskjöld a congenial companion. A man of the stature of Nordenskjöld would solicit comment and opinion from those in the early New Church, and Blake would certainly not demur from conversation on the topics raised by Nordenskjöld.

Carl Berns Wadström (1746-1799)

Carl Berns Wadström was born in Stockholm in 1746.[1] Educated at the University of Uppsala he was appointed to the Royal College of Mines. King Gustav III sent him on a dangerous mission, which was to go to Solingen in Prussia and discover the art of sword making, and if possible, to persuade skilled craftsmen to emigrate to Sweden. For his successful labours, the King elevated Wadström to the rank of Assessor at the College of Mines, a post that Swedenborg himself had previously held.

In 1776-78 he travelled to England, France and Germany, giving special attention to mining in Wales and cotton-spinning in Manchester. He introduced improved spinning and carding machines into Sweden on his return in 1777. By 1779 he became acquainted with the writings of Swedenborg through his friendship with Augustus Nordenskjöld, and together they formed an anti-slavery group in Norrkoping, most of whom were Swedenborgians. From this group, and with the support of Gustav permission was granted for forty families to emigrate and form a colony in Africa, with the object of bringing prosperity and civilisation to Africa and helping to stamp out the slave trade. But the war between England and France prevented the project from going ahead, at that time.

Contact was made with the Hindmarsh group of Swedenborgians in London, and in 1786 Wadström and C.F. Nordenskjöld founded in Stockholm the 'Exegetical and Philanthropic' Society (Exegetiska och Philantropiska Sallskapet), on the lines of the London Theosophical Society. But the African dream was ever present with him and in 1787, with the King's support, and accompanied by two scientists Anders Sparrman and Carl Axel Arrhenius he went to West Africa. On his return in 1788 seeking further support for his project, he and Arrhenius

Peter Panah and C.B. Wadström

testified to the Privy Council and the Parliament on the slave trade.

In 1788 Wadström also brought an African slave with him, whom he had purchased for £60. He was Prince Peter Panah, son of the King of Mesurado who had been kidnapped in Sierra Leone. Along with Panah, Wadström was baptised into the New Church. At the time a Swedish portrait painter was in London studying under Sir Joshua Reynolds; his name was Carl Frederick Breda. He painted a picture showing Wadström instructing Peter Panah in Swedenborg's Divine Providence. The Royal Academy of Sciences struck a medal in honour of Wadstrom in March 1861, and on the reverse there was an image of an African sitting under a palm tree reading a book, and at his feet the chains he had cast off. The inscription reads: Libertas meritis est mihi facto tuis (Liberty has become mine, by thy service).[2]

In the latter part of 1789 Wadström attended the weekly meetings of Henry Servanté, and it was from this group that the New Jerusalem Magazine was born. Wadström had brought to London several of Swedenborg's manuscripts from the Royal Academy of Sciences in Stockholm: he lodged these documents with Dr. Benedict Chastanier, who translated a number into English. Some of the translated material appeared in the New Jerusalem Magazine, along with information about the African project of a New Church colony in Cape Mesurado in Sierra Leone, including a fold-in map of the area. Wadström published a number of books on the slave trade, plans for a free community in Africa and his noted An Essay on Colonization, published in two parts in 1794 and 1795.[3] Along with maps there were also engraved plates of slaves ships and the way they were packed with their human cargo.

Although Wadström makes no direct reference to Swedenborg, his concepts were much coloured by what he had read in Swedenborg's works.

He records the following with respect to African religion:

> They believe simply that there exists in God, the Creator and Preserver of all things: and, in order to fix their ideas, they think on God, in some form or other; for to believe in any thing without form, they seem to think, is to believe in nothing. That, although some of them appear to consider the sun as the emblem of God, for they turn their faces towards it when praying, they seem all to believe, that God must be a man, or in human form; as they cannot think of any more perfect or respectable form to compare him with.[4]

This statement is reflective of Swedenborg's own remarks on the religion of the Africans:

> The Africans...worship the Lord under a human form.[5]

Blake himself was much interested in the subject with his comments on the passage in Divine Love and Wisdom relating to those who believe the idea of God to be as a cloud: his annotation reads:

> Think of a white cloud as being holy, you cannot love it; but think of a holy man within the cloud, love springs to your thoughts.[6]

And in his introduction to the Songs of Innocence, Blake speaks of seeing "On a cloud I saw a child' , while his 'The Little Black Boy' reflects the Swedenborgian viewpoint. No doubt his awareness of Wadström's widely circulated books, and the common Swedenborgian viewpoint on the African, would be powerful images as he illustrated the mistreatment of slaves in Stedman's Narrative of a Five Years' Expedition Against the Revolted Negroes of Surinam.

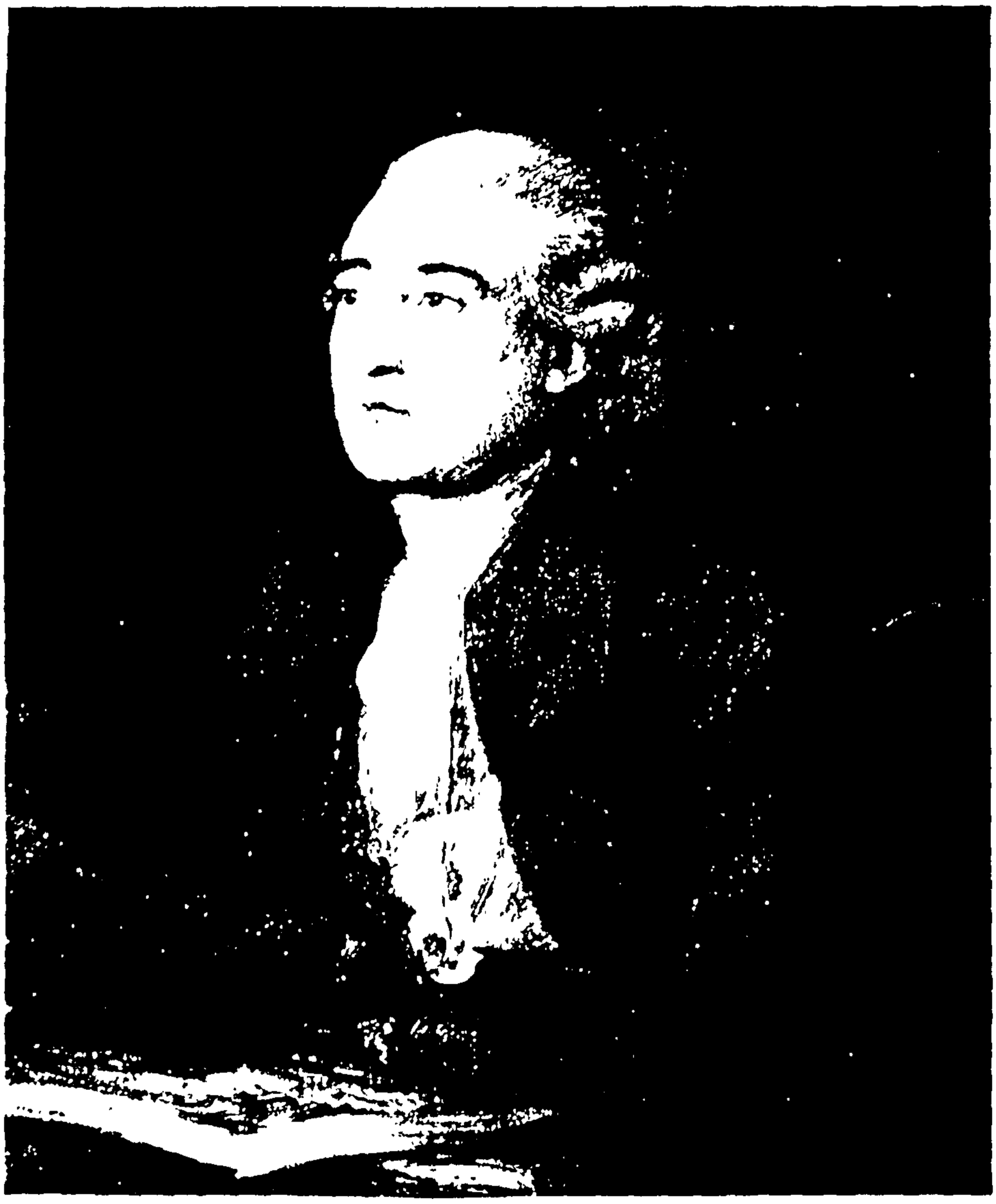
Wadström signed his name to the First General Conference of the New Church in 1789 held at the Great East Cheap Chapel. Blake and his wife attended that Conference. It is likely that Blake may well have met him, since Wadstrom had recently returned from Africa, and had brought with him the African Prince. Peter Panah died in October 1790, so he could have been present at the Conference.

Phillip James de Loutherbourg (1740-1812)

He was a celebrated French painter who lived in London after 1771. He is mentioned as one who attended meetings of the Theosophical Society, and exercised a keen interest in spiritual matters. From about 1783 he devoted himself increasingly to the study of mysticism. He claimed for himself the power of prophecy and healing, as can be seen from his work in 1789, A list of a few cures performed by Mr. & Mrs. de Loutherbourg of Hammersmith Terrace without medicine by a lover of the Lamb of God. He had occasional association with William Sharp, who was also a member of the Theosophical Society. Sharp was much impressed by his curative powers. In the 1790s, along with Sharp he became a follower of Richard Brothers. De Loutherbourg did not join the sectarian movement.

A brother of Thomas de Quincey was apprenticed to de Loutherbourg, and Hyde's Bibliography records that de Loutherbourg did a portrait of Swedenborg a little before his death in 1772. Hyde hints that the portrait is probably from life.[1] We certainly have no reference to the matter from Swedenborg himself. There is the hint that it has a strong resemblance to the copy of Martin's engraving. J.F. Martin did a copper plate of Swedenborg aged 80. It is attested by General Tuxen, and it was brought to England by C.B. Wadström and given into the hands of H. Servanté. Hyde also speaks of another copy being made by C. and C. Paas, which forms the frontipiece of the New Magazine of Knowledge.

Mention is made of a pupil of de Loutherbourg being present at one of Mrs. Harriet Matthew's parties.[2] Blake was a frequent visitor to such parties.



Phillip de Loutherbourg

F.H. Barthelemon (1741-1808)

He is no doubt the composer mentioned in the Dictionary of National Biography, a violinist, and a friend of Haydn. On Hindmarsh's list he notes: 'Musical Preceptor to their late Royal Highnesses the Dukes of York, Gloucester and Cumberland, and His Serene Highness the Duke of Brunswick; and for several years the Leader of the Band at the Ancient Concerts and the King's Theatre'. His name appears in Swedenborgian literature in the early 1790s. He contributed articles to The Magazine of Knowledge, and The New Jerusalem Magazine for 1790 contains a number of musical settings composed by Barthelemon. As the prospectus or "design" for the journal expresses it:

> X1 We have the pleasure to add, that Mr. Barthelemon, whose great ability in sacred composition are well known, has engaged to set to music on purpose for this work, the Psalms of David in regular order from the Bible version, so that the lovers of sacred melody will most probably be amply gratified in receiving such a selection of the Songs of Zion as have never hitherto appeared in a similar publication. In the first number will be given the Glorification of the Angels on the Lord's first Advent; and in the second number of this work, the Song of Moses and of the Lamb, as described in the XVth chapter of the Revelations, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty, &c, which song, we have reason to believe, will be sung with affection by every true member of the New Church.

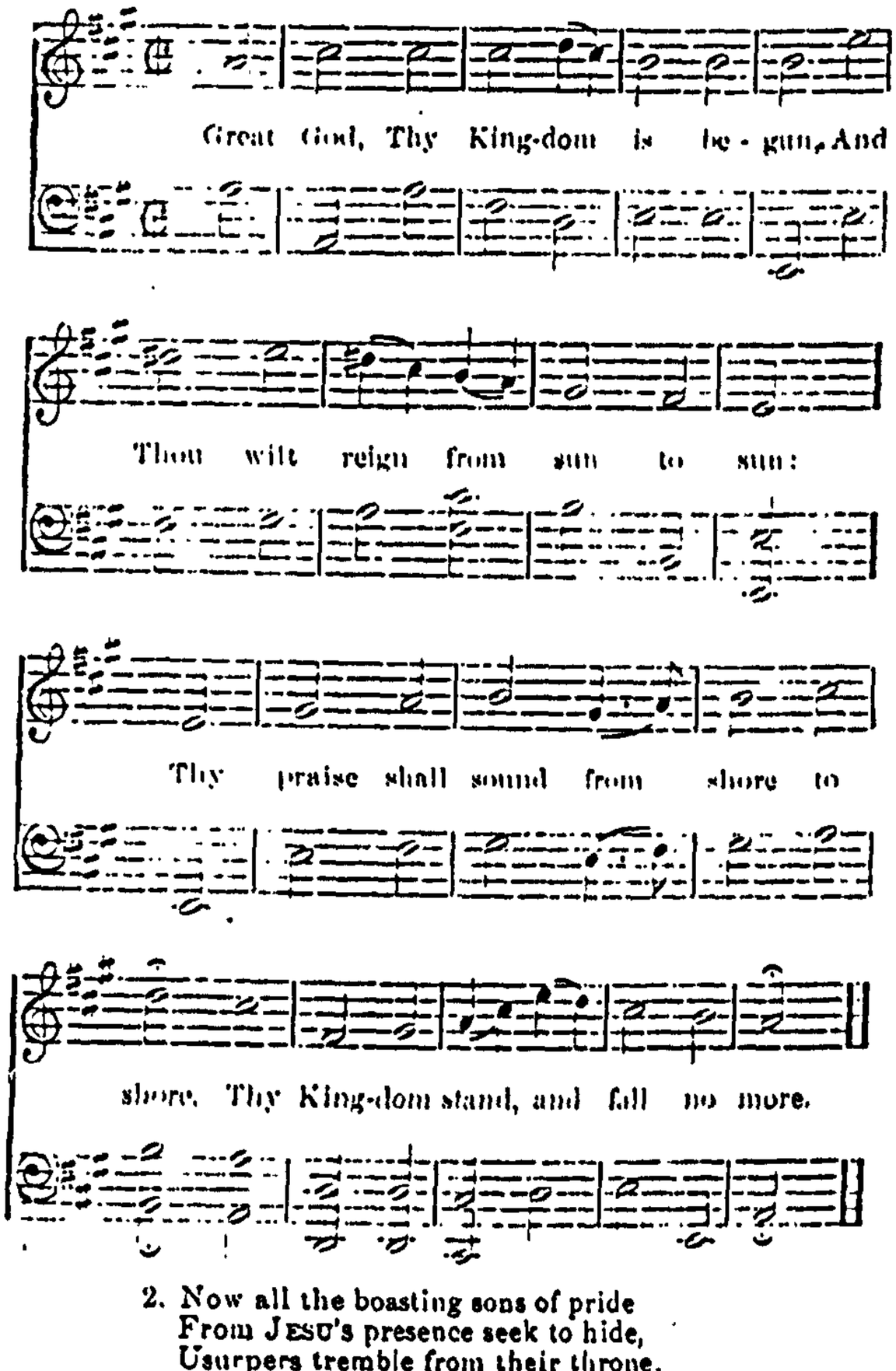
Barthelemon was also a director of the Lambeth Asylum for Female Orphans during the time of Duché's chaplaincy, and during Blake's residence in the area.

Barthelemon set music to compositions by Duché which were performed by the choir in the Asylum. He also composed a number of operas which were performed both in France and England. His best known tune is still played today in many churches, under the title 'Morning Hymn", to the words of Bishop Ken's hymn 'Awake my soul'. As can be

seen from the illustration below, the tune began its life as 'New Jerusalem'. It was used to accompany the words of Joseph Proud's hymn, 'Great God, Thy Kingdom is begun', at the direct request of Duché. Later Duché was to substitute Bishop Ken's words for those of the Rev. Joseph Proud.

THE NEW JERUSALEM.

The Music by F. H. Barthelemon.



2. Now all the boasting sons of pride
From JESU's presence seek to hide,
Usurpers tremble from their throne,
And our JEHOVAH reigns alone.

3. The dragon mighty to devour,
Who rul'd with a tyrannic pow'r;
The serpent cunning to decoy,
The devil eager to destroy:

4. These all the LORD shall put to flight,
And Hell shall tremble at His sight;
Kingdoms of darkness now must fall,
And JESUS be the LORD of all.

Francis Barthelemon

Barthelemon received a gift of Amore Conjugialis, which is in the Swedenborg Society Library, with the following inscription:

> This Book was the Gift of Baron Emanuel Swedenborg to His Excellency Baron Noleken, the Swedish ambassador, who made the present of it to Francis Barthelemon in London Dec. the 19th 1785, who gave it to the Society of the New Jerusalem Church in Red Cross Street London in 1795=39.

The Library also has a first edition of Vera Christiana Religio signed on the title page : "F.H. Barthelemon 1796=40, Kensington Palace, Vauxhall". On the flyleaf is written:

> The gift of Francis Barthelemon (the organist) to the Society of the Lord's New Jerusalem Church in Friars Street Blackfriars Nov.23, 1804. (who came to London Nov.11th 1763).

6. Society for the Promoting the Doctrines of the New Jerusalem

The Theosophical Society continued to meet in the Temple from 1783. Its printing, publishing and distribution work was extensive. It also undertook translation work, and encouraged others to gather themselves together for the reading and discussion of the works of Emanuel Swedenborg. The influence of the Society extended beyond the shores of the United Kingdom. But a number of the London members, under Hindmarsh's leadership, felt the need for public worship, and they resolved to submit a proposal for the opening of a place of worship. Hindmarsh was of the opinion that 'the promise and hope of increase to the Church attached more to the hearing of the Word preached, than to the reading of comments upon it, or to any private explanation that may be given to it'.[1]

On Thursday, 19th April, 1787, armed with suitable passages from the Word, Hindmarsh presented his proposal. It was rejected by a small majority, on the grounds that the proper time for separating from the Old Establishment had not yet arrived.[2] Those supportive of Hindmarsh decided to go ahead with a scheme for public worship, and at the same time would continue to remain members of the Theosophical Society.

The first regular meeting of the new Society took place on the 7th May, 1787. After 'mature deliberation' it was resolved to find a suitable chapel, in a convenient part of the town, which should be engaged for their use.[3] Various rules and regulations were drawn up for the functioning of the new Society. It continued to meet in the homes of members, and in particular the home of Mr. Thomas Willdon in Tooley Street, Southwark, then the home of Mr. Thomas Wright, Poultry, and afterwards at the home of Mr. John Willdon, Snowhill. At the Select

Meeting of Members on Sunday, 29th July, 1787, at the home of Mr. Wright, a paper was presented by Mr. James Glen on the general principles of the New Church. In effect these were the rules for the establishment of an institution which was to be an external form of the New Church. [4] On Tuesday, 31st July, 1787, they met at the same place, and after determining by lot, Mr. James Hindmarsh administered the Sacrament of the Holy Supper to the assembled gathering. So began 'the commencement of the New Church in its External and Visible form in the City of London'.[5]

A search was made for a suitable place for worship, and one was found in Great East Cheap. In July 1787, it was recognised that a proper register should be kept, and that a Dissenters Licence was necessary.

On Sunday, 27th January, 1788, a formal service was held in the Chapel with Mr. James Hindmarsh presiding. By May 1788, they had changed their name from the familiar 'Theosophical Society' to 'New Church, signified by the New Jerusalem in the Revelation'.[6]

In the poem 'Garden of Love' Blake makes reference to a Chapel, over the doors of which is written: 'Thou shalt not'. When Blake attended the First General Conference of the New Church in April 1790, the East Cheap Chapel in which the meeting took place had written over the doorway, 'Nunc Licet'. These doorway statements suggest both the negative and the positive way to Christianity. There could be here a connection in Blake's mind of the 'Old' Church and the 'New' Church, terms used frequently at meetings of the Theosophical Society and the First General Conference.

The Chapel cast the die for separation. With the opening of the chapel for worship there was a decrease in the number of those

attending the Society meetings in the Temple. The separatists found all their needs met by the East Cheap Chapel, while the non-separatists found the Temple meeting room too large for their numbers. The non-separatists continued for a little while under the title of 'Society for Promoting the Heavenly Doctrines of the New Jerusalem', holding their meetings at the homes of members, and finally at the home of Mr. Prichard in Doctors' Commons. They took charge of all the books belonging to the old Society, and sponsored three issues of New Jerusalem and its Heavenly Doctrines, as well as working with the old friends in Manchester, in joint ventures. However, by 1788 they were disbanded, as Hindmarsh states:

> having successfully promoted the cause for which it was founded, namely, the translating, printing, and publishing, the Theological Writings of Emanuel Swedenborg;

he acknowledges that they gave birth to the new Society 'for the express purpose of instituting public worship'.[7]

In the history of the New Church the non-sectarians disappear from the scene. This can be accounted for by their small number, but more likely that the separatists continued the history, recording the development of societies in various parts of the country. It was not until 1810 with the establishment of the 'London Society for Printing' by C.A.Tulk, John Flaxman and others, which later became 'the Swedenborg Society', that the non-separatist or independent sphere re-appeared. Blake himself would have been more sympathetic to the non-separatists, since he himself had little time for the priesthood or formal church services, both of which appeared uppermost in the mind of Robert Hindmarsh.

71. The Sectarian Movement 1787-89

The Theosophical Society had been the means of bringing together those interested in the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg in London. His works were read, discussed, translated and published by the members. There was no thought at the beginning of the Society that an organised New Church institution might be established as a result of the group's activities. In theory Swedenborg did not found a New Church organisation: his work is the presentation of a new dispensation given to him by the Lord Jesus Christ, while he was reading the Sacred Scriptures, and which he published. The Second Coming of the Lord was through the instrumentality of Swedenborg. He states:

> The Second Coming of the Lord is effected by means of a man, to whom the Lord has manifested himself in person, and whom he has filled with his spirit, to teach the doctrines of the New Church from himself, through the Word.[1]

The New Church is seen in spiritual terms, and is addressed to the spirituality of man, rather than to a structured organisation. Those who were willing to accept the doctrines were of the New Church, provided they lived their lives in accordance with the new truths. Thus, the teachings were open to all in Christendom. If in the works themselves condemnation could be found of the present Christian Church, others at the time expressed similar sentiments. But in the work was equally found the dictum that they who live their lives in accordance with their faith are saved. Faith conjoined with charity becomes the keynote: so action in life rather than profession to a manmade institution was the overriding factor. The New Church is seen as a spiritual entity as opposed to an organisational structure on earth. Blake, like Swedenborg, emphasises that ideas, thoughts and actions were more important guides to life than rules of admission to a social structure. In his copy of Divine Love and

Wisdom, Blake wrote in the margin: 'The whole of the New Church is in the Active Life & not in ceremonies at all'.[2] Swedenborg makes the following comment in a 'Memorable Relation' to be found in the work True Christian Religion:

> Charity is nothing without faith, neither is faith anything without charity, nor charity and faith without works; but in works they are something, and a something of the same nature as the use of the works. It is the same with affection, thought and operation.[3] And the same with will, understanding and action.[3]

What moved Hindmarsh then to go beyond the objects and aims of the Theosophical Society to the establishment of a Church organisation? The separatist elements, which led to the calling of the First General Conference of the New Church in 1789, owe their origin to more than a single action: several complex and inter-related factors were involved. On examining these it is possible to appreciate why a goodly number of the members of the Theosophical Society supported the resolution put forward by Hindmarsh for a separation from the 'Old Christian Church' and the formation of a 'New Christian Church', in a real and structured organisational form. Such an examination also reveals why there were those who were unable to follow Hindmarsh's proposed action.

There were two groups enthusiastic for the teachings to be found in the works of Emanuel Swedenborg, one in London and the other in Manchester (the larger of the two). What Hindmarsh had done in London with the Theosophical Society, the Rev. John Clowes had done some years previously in Manchester. Clowes had gathered round a number of interested folk who met in his vestry at St. Johns Deansgate, for discussion. Later they were to form themselves into the 'Society of Gentlemen' and cover the cost of publishing Clowes' translations of the writings of Swedenborg. Throughout this time John Clowes remained an Anglican priest. He firmly believed that Swedenborg's New Church would

rise from the Old Christian Church. Swedenborgian teaching was the basis for John Clowes' teaching and preaching, as is revealed in his sermons, commentaries on the Bible, as well as many original works he saw through the press.[4] At the instigation of someone associated with St. John's, and with the support of three local clergy 'who held regular meetings every week, for the purpose of crushing what they were pleased to call, the growing heresy', formal charges were made to the Bishop of Chester, the Rev. Dr. Beilby Porteus.[5] Clowes duly appeared before the bishop, presented his case, and the bishop suggested that the thoughts expressed were not far from his own sentiments. Clowes was instructed to return home and be a little more careful.[6] This attitude of the bishop. tells us much about the man himself. In 1773 he sought to reform the Liturgy of the Church of England as well as make changes in the 39 Articles. Later he was translated to the See of London, and was instrumental in the Act of Parliament which gave legal status and rights to dissenting religious bodies.[7] Hindmarsh notes that Dr. Porteus sent his chaplain to secure a copy of the circular with the invitation to the First General Conference.[8] The Rev. John Clowes was vindicated, and with such official toleration he and his Manchester followers could enjoy the luxury of promoting Swedenborgianism without recourse to separation. From such a solid foundation Clowes was able to challenge Hindmarsh and his friends: this he did both by letter and in person as we shall see later.[9]

Not only was Clowes able to present the alternative to the separatist, he demonstrated something of the tolerance of the Established Church, so making his case the stronger.

The Establishment can always afford to tolerate those within its ranks who have differing ideas. Such can act as a catalyst for the improvement and strengthening of the whole. The dissenter can be

tolerated provided he remains within the established body: problems arise when the dissenter creates for himself an organisation for his differing ideas in opposition to the Establishment. The Rev. John Clowes could be tolerated because he did not wish to break down the Established Church; rather did he desire to transform it so that it could be of greater use. This is why the ideas of Swedenborg could be tolerated, because they were not seen to be in opposition to the established beliefs, but as a means of transforming them into an even greater usefulness. Swedenborg himself was of the Established Church in Sweden and his father was a bishop of that Church. The Rev. Thomas Hartley remained within the Established Church even though he published works supporting Swedenborgian ideas. The Rev. Jacob Duché remained an Anglican even though he opened his home in order to gather together those who were interested in the ideas of Swedenborg. The dissenter must be given the right to express himself, provided he did it within the channel of the Establishment. This attitude reflects the conviction that the Established Church had placed in the social order as a force for good.[10] This was nothing short of a 'divine right'. So membership of the Established Church expressed more than beliefs in Anglicanism: it declared the conviction that the Church had a particular and peculiar use to perform in the world, which could not be given to another. Such a corporate use for society was greater than any individual dissenter within its ranks.

But the dissenter who wished to separate from the Established Church was expressing a conviction that the function claimed by the Church was no longer being discharged by it. Therefore it was old, out-dated, and of no real use in the world. From such conviction it is not difficult to move to the declaration of the need for a new structured organisation which could continue the role. The missionary zeal for this would cause

concern, because the dissent was a challenge to the vested authority of the Establishment. So there is inevitable conflict between Clowes and Hindmarsh. Robert Hindmarsh had been nurtured in the Methodist tradition, which was itself a dissenting breakaway movement from the Established Church. If organisational dissent was the religious expression for Hindmarsh, prior to his receiving the doctrines of Swedenborg, then it was not so difficult for him to see that the ultimate way his Swedenborgian beliefs would receive their true recognition was through the formation of a new separate body. Some of those within the Theosophical Society were conscious that the new teachings of Swedenborg had not been widely received by the Established Church, as they might have hoped. The only alternative was separation, and the establishment of a new body. A further factor which could have accelerated Robert Hindmarsh's desire for an established organisational New Church, was the action of Wesley. James Hindmarsh, Robert's father, was a teacher of Kingswood School, a Methodist Seminary, and later an itinerant preacher for Wesley.[11] He introduced his son to George Keen in Bristol, from whom he borrowed books of Swedenborg's teachings, though James himself was not a reader of these works. By 1785 James was becoming a reader and he introduced them to a fellow minister, the Rev. Isaac Hawkins, who had taken to reading them at meetings on Sunday evenings. This resulted in Hawkins being called before Wesley and expelled from the Wesleyan connection. By implication it meant that James also would be expelled. The desire for a separate organisation could therefore more easily be established, because there would be two trained ministers to lead it.

In April 1787 Robert Hindmarsh, along with others of the Theosophical Society, introduced a resolution urging the opening of a separate place of worship. In Hindmarsh's words, the motion 'was negatived by a small majority'.[12] John Clowes visited the Society about

this time to urge them not to separate. But in May 1787 a new Society was formed of those who wished to follow what Robert Hindmarsh urged, and on Sunday, July 29th, 1787, a formal constitution was agreed. Mr. James Glen had drafted the constitution which in effect made the group the dispenser of the sacraments of Baptism and Holy Supper. Introduction into the New Church was to be through baptism, and the holy supper taken in the New Church would be 'according to Heavenly and Divine correspondences'.[13] At the request of James Glen the first service of this 'external and visible form' of the New Church, city of London was to take place on Tuesday, 31st July, 1787. In a solemn manner James Hindmarsh administered the Holy Supper to the eleven members present, then he administered the sacrament of Baptism to five of the members.[14] In October the group rented a chapel in Great East Cheap, which they began to occupy in November, and by January, 1788 they held their first public service, conducted by James Hindmarsh. The required Dissenters' License was obtained, for the 'New Jerusalem Church' in Great East Cheap. In the course of the year they adopted the name, 'The New Church, signified by the New Jerusalem in the Revelation'.[15] James Hindmarsh and Samuel Smith were ordained the first ministers of the Church.[16]

In the spring of 1787 John Clowes had visited the London group to urge them not to separate. In November 1787 he sent a letter urging those in the East Cheap Society not to separate.[17] Clowes argues that such a separation would impede the 'circulation of the heavenly doctrines', and such an action would 'defile' their 'purity'. As Clowes remarks, "the proof of church membership was simple, being grounded in repentance and faith in the Incarnate God'. As far as Clowes was concerned the 'Church herself was tolerant, unbigoted and universal'. One day the New Jerusalem Church would be established as the kind of utopian state, with the moves

being from within established christendom. The old edifice would crumble away revealing a glorious new institution lasting for ever. Hindmarsh was hastening this day, but Clowes asks: 'Is it right, in short, to give the appearance of deformity to what in itself is altogether beautiful, and to render that disgusting and hateful, which in its own proper aspect is attractive, alluring and lovely?'.

On December 7th, 1788 Hindmarsh and his group published a letter, entitled Reasons for Separation from the Old Church, as a rebuff to the letter of Clowes and his group in Manchester. This document was to be forerunner for the calling of the First General Conference which Blake attended. Hindmarsh points out that the faith of the New Church is diametrically opposite to that of the Old Church. The trinitarian doctrine pervaded the Old Church 'naturally begets the pernicious doctrine of justification by Faith alone'. The New Church 'acknowledgement of the one God in the Divine Humanity in the LORD JESUS CHRIST produces a life according to His commandments'. There is stress made that the receivers of Swedenborg's works should inculcate them in their families. The letter ends with an extensive quotation from True Christian Religion concerning the falsity of trinitarian doctrine and the spiritual emptiness of the Old Church. Seventy persons appended their name to the letter, and these are reproduced in the published version.[18]

The group gave approval on the 7th December for a General Conference to be held during Easter Week 1789. Five hundred copies of the circular letter calling the First General Conference would be sent to various Persons in different parts of England . Through this letter the purposes and plans of the separation would be known well in advance to those attending. So Blake was well aware of the tenor the meeting was likely to take.

The circular states that those assembled in East Cheap on the 7th December, 1788 were desirous of separating from the Old Church, and the invitation was given to those who might have similar sentiments to join them.

> General CONFERENCE of all the Readers of the Theological Writings of Emanuel Swedenborg, who are desirous of rejecting and separating themselves from the Old Church, or the present established Churches, together with all their Sectaries.[19]

On the 13th April, 1789 those gathered at East Cheap for the Conference would consider forty-two propositions. These propositions covered the basic doctrines of the New Church along with extensive quotations from Swedenborg's works in support of them. The circular ends thus:

> Sir,
> As a friend of the Establishment of the New Church distinct from the Old, you are hereby invited to the above-mentioned CONFERENCE, to be held in Great East Cheap, London, on Easter Monday the 13th of April next, at Nine o'Clock in the Morning. Any Person within the Circle of your Acquaintance, whom you know to be a Lover of the Truth contained in the Theological Writings of EMANUEL SWEDENBORG, and friendly to the Formation of a New Church, agreeable to the doctrines contained in the said Writings, and consistent with the Plane proposed in this Circular Paper, you are at Liberty also to invite.[20]

Some nine members signed the circular letter on 'Behalf of the New Church in London'. Blake responded to the invitation, and he and his wife attended the Conference.

8. General Conference, April 1789

The **Invitation** Letter calling the Conference gave details of date, time and place of the meeting.[1] It also contained 'forty-two propositions'. These were self-explanatory statements covering the leading aspects of Swedenborg's teachings. Each proposition was amply supported by references to Swedenborg's writings. In this approach the organisers of the Conference were using Swedenborg to justify their actions. Others who might oppose them must show other passages from Swedenborg's work to counter their actions. Clowes had not sought to do this, because he did not feel the writings must be used for such a purpose. When Blake responded to the invitation he was well aware of the logical outcome long before the President of the Conference announced on the first day:

> It is presumed, that all present are well acquainted with the Design of the present Meeting, that it is, as stated in the Circular Letter, for the Purpose of considering the most effectual Means of promoting the Establishment of the New Church, distinct from the Old, and for entering into such Resolutions, as may appear necessary in a Work of so great Importance.[2]

William Blake, along with his wife Catherine and others, reached the Great East Cheap Chapel by wálking down 'the small, narrow court leading out in the street'. There was a 'painted board, on which was inscribed THE NEW JERUSALEM CHURCH', and over the door leading into the chapel itself was written 'Now it is allowable'.[3] By the end of the Conference 'thirty-two' individual resolutions had been 'unanimously' approved for the various propositions were gathered into these resolutions and assent for each was called for. Also, on the final day, the completed set of resolutions was 'unanimously' adopted. Blake and his wife were a part of that consenting body, and his assent is recorded in the Minute Book of the East Cheap Society. In the printed minutes only fourteen names

appear, who 'Signed on Behalf of this Conference', and Blake's name was not among them.[4]

The prime object of the meeting was the separation from the Old and the establishment of a New Church. It was taken for granted that the essential doctrines would be accepted without question, since these would have been the self-same doctrines which attracted those at Conference to the thoughts of Swedenborg. But certain resolutions should be examined for they highlight features that were attractive to Blake as being reasonable, and they formed the basis of his Swedenborgian thinking.

There is a reasonableness about Swedenborgian thought, that rational consistency which leads to the conclusion that they are divinely inspired. This being so, the validity can rest on the written work, rather than the need to speak of Swedenborg's other worldly experiences. The teachings can stand up for themselves. This Blake found attractive, as his marginal notes testify. So Blake would find no difficulty in accepting the first resolution:

> That it is the Opinion of this Conference, that the Theological Works of the Hon. Emanuel Swedenborg are perfectly consistent with the Holy Word, being at the same Time explanatory of its internal Sense in so wonderful a Manner, that Nothing short of Divine Revelation seems adequate thereto .....(Resolution 1).

The Second Resolution speaks of the unity in God in contrast to the trinitarian error; 'the Divine and Infinite Trinity which also exists in the Glorified Humanity of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ'. Added to this is the comment, 'it is a Truth founded in, and demonstrable from the Holy Scriptures or Word of God, as well as consistent with sound Rationality'. Blakean scholars recognise the influence of the 'Divine Human' upon Blake's thinking.[5] Blake was also attracted to the experience and opinion of the individual; here is reflected something

of the dissenter and independent spirit. So happily he would have assented to Resolution XX which speaks of the superiority of rational conviction, over that of persuasion by miracles.[6] While Resolution XXVIII stresses the 'internal sense of the Word' as being 'rationally understood' by members of the New Church. Resolution XVI speaks of the 'Threefold sense' of the Word, namely 'Celestial, Spiritual, and Natural, which are united by Correspondences'; and that in each sense it is Divine Truth accommodated respectively to the angels of the three heavens and also men on earth', as it is expressed in Proposition XI. Here is the uniqueness of the Word in Swedenborg's thoughts, for he declares that only certain books in the Bible have this inner or internal sense.[7] Conference acknowledged this as follows:

> That it is the opinion of this Conference, that those Books only, which contain the Internal sense, and are enumerated in the Twelfth Proposition, ought to be received by the New Church as Canonical, or of Divine Authority, inasmuch as they treat of the Lord alone, and of the most holy things of Heaven and the Church (Resolution XVII).

Proposition XII enumerated the Books of the Bible which have an internal sense, and these are said to be the books of the Word; support for this is cited from Arcana Caelestia n.10325, New Jerusalem n.266, White Horse n.16. At the time, New Jerusalem and its Heavenly Doctrines was available in an English translation, as was White Horse, but not the quotation in Arcana Caelestia, since this is found in volume 10, and only the first four volumes had been translated into English. However the canonical list was stated in the Proposition and Blake was able to use it in plate 48 of Jerusalem. In the previous plate the condition of man had fallen to its lowest point, and Albion speaks his last words - 'Hope is banish'd from me'.[8] Then the Saviour receives Albion and in mercy reposes his limbs on the Rock of Ages:

In silence the Divine Lord builded with immortal labour,
Of gold & jewels, a sublime Ornament, a Couch of repose
With Sixteen pillars, canopied with emblems & written verse,
Spiritual Verse, order'd & measur'd: from whence time shall reveal
The Five books of the Decalogue: the books of Joshua & Judges,
Samuel, a double book, & Kings, a double book, the Psalms &
Prophets,
The Four-fold Gospel, and the Revelations everlasting.
Eternity groan'd & was troubled at the image of Eternal Death![9]

The Bible was a compelling source book for Blake: not only did he read it, 'he saw it also. The white page came stained with colour and scored with line'.[10] Like other Romantic poets he was equally interested in the new biblical criticism.[11] For biblical art took the form of not only a visual presentation of the living Word but an interpretation as well.[12] This Proposition made an impact on his mind, not only at the time of the Conference itself, but as we see he has cause to use it in Jerusalem, which was written some years later. The emblematic action of placing the body of Albion on the 'Rock of Ages', signifies for Blake the solid foundation of faith in Christ. Biblical prophecy is full of emblematic action, in which the prophets perform certain actions which in themselves become the form of the message; examples of this can be found in Isaiah and Ezekiel.[13] Blake uses the same form in the second Memorable Fancy of The Marriage of Heaven and Hell.[14] As Tannenbaum expresses it in his study of the influence of biblical tradition on Blake's early prophecies:

> Blake's essentially figurative art, which illustrates his prophecies, using the human form to express spiritual states, can be seen as an extension into the plastic art of the prophet's dramatic use of the human form to shape and reinforce his verbal message.[15]

If Blake cannot use to the full material to be found in Swedenborg's Arcana Caelestia, it is because it is too complex to be captured in the engraving of the artist. But that does not deny the interpetation found in Swedenborg's biblical expositions, which as Blake

remarked were well worth the study by any artist.[16] Like the prophetic practice of giving a vision in brief and then elaborating upon it in detail, Blake uses this same technique.[17] To cite Tannenbaum further, Blake

> found in the Bible, a concept of art that is visual, dramatic and rhetorical that combines spectacle and confrontation, that acts upon the reader and enjoins the reader to act in response to it.[18]

Swedenborg speaks of the need for the rational approach; Blake crossed swords with him on this matter.[19] But Swedenborg stresses that things must not be accepted blindly on the say so of another, no matter his position or station. It was necessary for man to think matters through himself. Blake warmed to such sentiment. In the Propositions we find that the new sect about to be inaugurated will expect of its members a freedom of thought in spiritual matters. Swedenborg stated that as a result of the Last Judgment and the Second Advent, there would be a freedom of thought in all matters of religion.[20] Over the door into the East Cheap Chapel were the words: 'Now it is allowable'.[21] This thought was found in Proposition XXXIII:

> Now it is allowable to enter intellectually into the Mysteries of Faith, contrary to the ruling maxim of the Old Church, that understanding is to be kept in bound under Obedience to Faith,

This was gathered into Resolution XI, along with several other Propositions, in the words: 'the exercise of the Rational Understanding in matters of Faith'.

Many members of the Theosophical Society had found in Swedenborg's writing a rational expression to their deep felt feeling. The mystics, such as Boheme and Law, might well give breadth to their feelings, but they lacked a rational foundation. A claim to 'revelation' required more than the statement of the revelator: it must

be logically acceptable to the understanding of man, and at the same time something akin to Divine Revelation (as was stated in Resolution 1 about Swedenborg's work). Was it this rational presentation which was attractive to Blake? The Swedenborgians certainly did not wish to be the popular stereotype of a sect. Maybe this is why Blake was not attracted to Richard Brothers or Joanna Southcott. His friend Sharp certainly wanted the assurance by miracle and prophecy. The description of the world to which he subscribed was related to the natural and spiritual realities, so he was willing to leave the Swedenborgians and associate with Brothers and Southcott.[22] Blake expresses his disagreement with Sharp in the assent he gave to the following:

> That it is the opinion of this Conference that the working of Miracles, which was necessary for establishing the first Christian Church, is now superseded by the plain Manifestation of Divine Truth in the Holy Word, and the Revelation of its Internal sense; the effect whereof is as much superior to that of Miracles, as the Understanding is superior to the bodily eye (Resolution XX).

Liberty was dear to Blake's heart, though his revolutionary principles went deeper than any mere idea of social or political change. He was sympathetic to the ideas of Thomas Paine, and the French Revolution he might well have identified with the beginnings of a New Age.He saw himself a child and a prophet to the English people. So a resolution which speaks of the desire to 'emancipate Mankind from the mental Bondage and Slavery', would receive his blessing. But those at Conference were lovers of their own country, since the 'neighbour' to be loved is one's own country, so Blake would accept the value of the following:

> That it is the Opinion of this Conference, that the Writings of Emanuel Swedenborg are calculated to promote the Peace and Happiness of Mankind, by making them loyal Subjects, Lovers of their Country, and useful Members of Society; And therefore that these Resolutions are not

> intended to militate against, or in smallest Degree to annul the Civil Authority in any Country; but only to emancipate Mankind from the mental Bondage and Slavery, wherein they have so long been held captive by the Leaders and Rulers of the Old Church (Resolution XXXI).

Blake could sense the apathy of the Church of England in its support of vested interests and the crushing of natural joys, that he reflects:

> And Priests in black gowns were walking their rounds,[23]
> And binding with briars,my joys & desires.

Blake was one who sang:

> I know of no other Christianity and of no other Gospel than the liberty of body mind & body to exercise the Divine Arts of Imagination.[24]

Without doubt Blake would find support for his own thoughts in the following resolution, for which he gave glad assent:

> That is the Opinion of this Conference that the Establishment of the New Church will be effected by a gradual separation from the Old Church, in Consequence of a rational Conviction wrought in the Minds of those, which are in Search of Truth for the sake of Truth, and who are determined to judge for themselves in spiritual Things, without any regard to the Influence of Authority of the Clergy in the Old Church, or the hope of Preferment either in Church or State (Resolution XI).

Since the object of Conference was to establish a new institutional church, practical issues were involved in the projected separation. These had been raised in the propositions and we find them gathered into a number of resolutions put to the Conference. Stress was laid on the teaching of children within the families of members, so the teachings of Swedenborg were to be used for the formulation of a catechism:

> That it is the opinion of this Conference, that for the above purpose it is expedient that a Catechism be drawn up for the use of the New Church, and that a deputation from this Conference be appointed to see the same put into execution (Resolution XI).

Another resolution put forward was that of Baptism into the New Church: it was recommended that 'Members of the New Jerusalem Church be rebaptised in the Faith of the New' (Resolution XXII). There is no record that Blake and his wife were so baptised, even if the resolution was passed 'unanimously' as Hindmarsh states. The Conference also expressed its feelings on the Holy Supper. There was the thought of the insidious influence of the Old Church in this most holy act of worship, which 'would be a Solemn Acknowledgment of the Existence of Three Gods, and that the sum and substance of Redemption consisted in the Passion of the Cross, as a Satisfaction or Atonement made to appease the Wrath of the Father' (Resolution XXIII). The Conference members were always strongest when it came to condemnation of the doctrines of the Established Church, especially the doctrine of the Trinity. Here again, Blake would be sympathetic, for he too was not happy with such doctrines, and his presence at Conference is a form of dissent. He regarded himself as a Christian, but he did not fully participate in any institutionalised form of the Christian religion. Though his 'rites de passages' are all Anglican, he held to his father's dissenting attitude, if not to the form it took. ' His father was a Baptist.[25] It cannot therefore be confirmed that his presence at Conference was clear proof of his Newchurchmanship. More likely than not he saw in Swedenborg an idealism for the Christian Church, but did not see Hindmarsh and his friends as creating an institution which would truly mirror that. Yet his own dissenting spirit moved him to attend the Conference and give support to that which would challenge the Establishment. Even the instigators of the separatist movement recognised that their form of the New Church would not necessarily be the only form, as expressed in the following:

> there may be many Varieties of external Worship ... provided that they are all influenced by the genuine Doctrines of the Lord and of Charity (Resolution XXI).

Blake was sympathetic to the objects and aim of those at the First General Conference; he would support their endorsement of Swedenborg's teachings; he would be prepared to break a hole in the side of the Establishment, in order to bring about change, he may even recognise that the New Church should take on an external form if it were to make an impact on the nation; but he would not necessarily accept that the East Cheap Society was his standard of the ideal institution. As a revolutionary he was never put to the test; and if we see the First Conference as a form of revolution - or at least a challenge to the Establishment - does Blake want to take up arms? Is his revolutionary stance one of the mind and spirit, rather than external action? There were so many resolutions at Conference which he would support wholeheartedly, for they pointed to the New Age, the dream of tomorrow and the glory once more for England and its people. Swedenborg expressed the universality of salvation for all, including the pagan: it was a question of holding to the known faith now, and living according to it, and then being instructed in the after life. Here was the demonstration that Christ was the saviour of all. This spirit is captured in the following:

> That it is the opinion of this Conference, that men of every Religion or Persuasion throughout the whole world, even Pagan and Idolaters, are saved, after receiving instruction in the Spiritual World, provided they have lived a life of Charity, according to the best of their knowledge (Resolution XXVII).

Does this not confirm Blake's feeling as reflected in <u>The Little Black Boy</u>?

> And we are put on earth a little space,
> That we may learn to bear the beam of love.
> And these black bodies and this sun-burnt face
> Is but a cloud, and like a shady grove.

> For when our souls have learn'd the heat to bear
> The cloud will vanish we shall hear his voice,
> Saying : come out from the grove. my love & care,
> And round my golden tent like lambs rejoice .

And again confirmed in 'The Chimney Sweeper,' which hints at the 'dark' skin and the outcast, who went about his 'duty', as a symbol for charity. As Swedenborg expresses it: 'Charity and faith are merely fleeting mental abstractions unless, whenever it is possible, they are expressed in works, and exist together in them' (True Christian Religion, 375).

Blake found many kindred spirits at that first General Conference. His presence may declare something of his own deep feelings for a new institution which would embrace his longed for dreams. Swedenborg's teachings may suggest an ideal religious institution, but would this be ever possible? Was Christianity not a relationship of the individual with his Lord, that spiritual bond, rather than the endorsement of a manmade organisation?

Blake's presence at Conference would not appear out of place, for the group was composed of many tradesmen, craftsmen or artisans. They also came from many social, economic and educational backgrounds not unlike that of Blake himself. Many were interested in the mystics, and sensed the failure in the Established Church to meet the needs of the times.

No review of the First General Conference would be complete without some comment on those who did not attend. One such person was the Rev. Jacob Duché. He had expressed his revolutionary feelings, only to change his mind and find exile in England. Was he equally afraid to take up the revolutionary cause of the New Church? This is one person known to Blake, for he subscribed to Duché's Discourses in 1779. The Rev. John Clowes was missing: he had expressed his feelings to

Hindmarsh and those at Great East Cheap earlier: he was not in favour of separation. Blake may well have been aware of his letter to the group, but he would not be sympathetic to it. Blake desired change in the establishment. Further, even though the preface is unsigned, Blake condemns Divine Providence as much for its preface as for its contents. That preface had been contributed by Clowes: was Blake aware of this, and so condemned it as the work as 'lies & priestcraft'? Blake was aware that his dear friend John Flaxman was not present, because he had recently gone to Italy. George Adam's name does not appear on those associated with the First General Conference. Adams read the writings in Latin at the early meetings of the Theosophical Society.[26] He was also associated with the translation of Apocalypse Explained, as was William Spence.[27] Spence was a surgeon, and his name does not appear on the separatists list. Another person missing, who would be known to Blake if he ever attended any of the meetings of the Theosophical Society, or the home of Mr. Duché, was that of Joshua Jones Pritchard, a learned Proctor. He was secretary of the Theosophical Society in 1785, and became the leader of the group that opposed separation in 1788.[28] Were the absence of such distinguished men of the Society noted by Blake? His publication of The Marriage of Heaven and Hell marks a rejection of the separatist group, while at the same time reflecting his own criticism of Swedenborg, and therefore, his rejection of the New Church as so constituted.

9. The London Universal Society

The 'London Universal Society for the Promotion of the New Jerusalem Church' was founded a little before 1790 and survived at least until May 1791. It was an independent association and was responsible for the publication of the first journal in the New Church, the New Jerusalem Magazine.[1] Under the editorship of Henry Servanté six monthly issues were published, and in these appeared a serial translation of passages from Conjugal Love.[2] An appendix to the last issue announced the proposed publication of the translation by Benedict Chastanier of Swedenborg's Spiritual Diary.[3] The journal records that the members of the Society met weekly to discuss Swedenborg's teachings. In the illustrations (Figures A and B) can be seen the title page of the magazine, along with its interpretation, and an engraving from Conjugal Love. Neither is the work of Blake, but it does show that there was a possibility of using Swedenborgian material as an expression of symbolic art, which Blake was himself to do in plate eight of the Descriptive Catalogue.

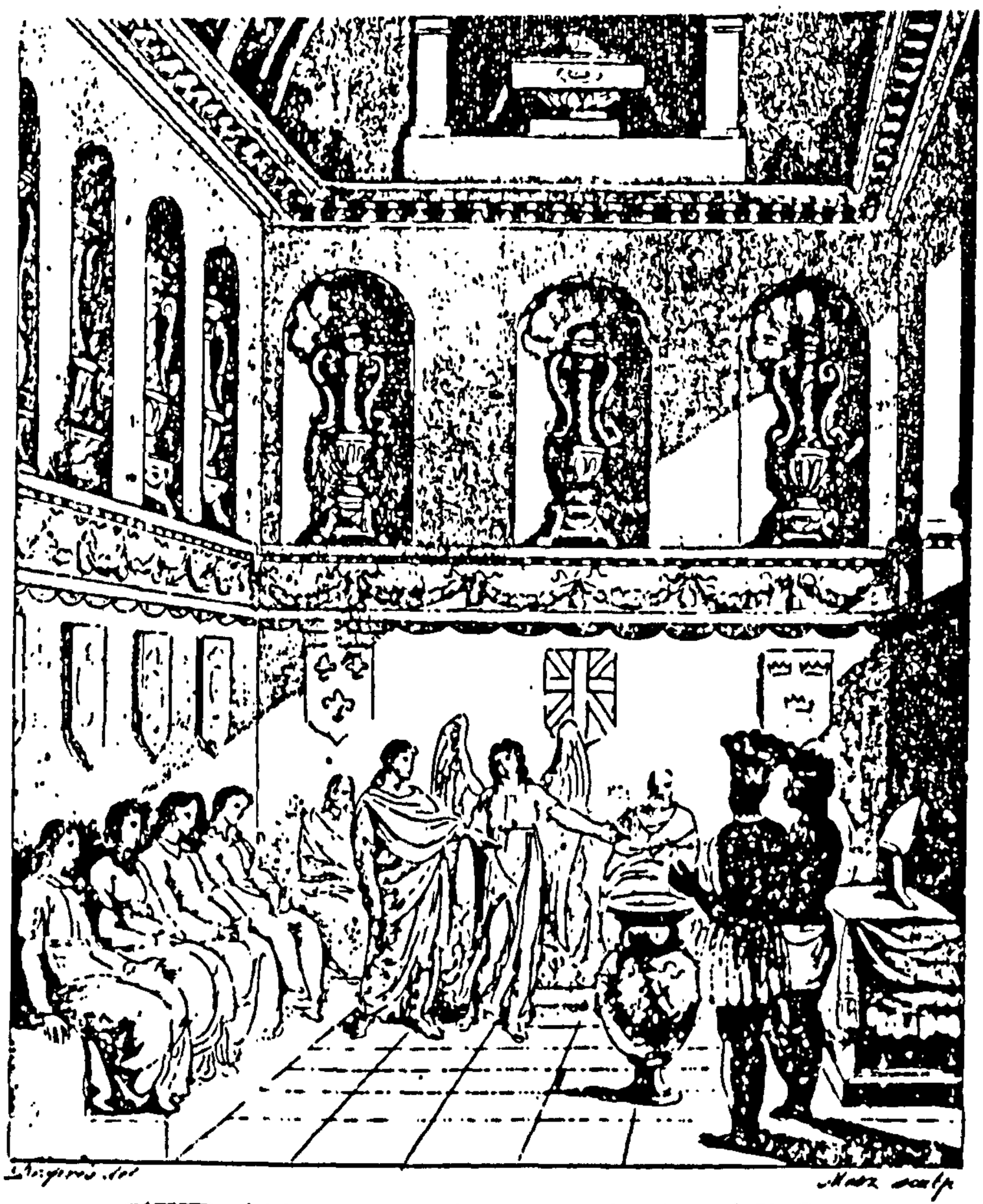
Among the members of the Society, along with Servanté and Chastanier, were two Swedes, Augustus Nordenskjöld and C.B. Wadström, as well as J.A. Tulk. These men had been associated with the old Theosophical Society and were among the signatories to the Minutes of the First General Conference. Why then should they form an independent body? In 1790 there was a controversy in the East Cheap Society on the subject of the interpretation of the section in Conjugal Love on concubinage. Servanté, Chastanier, Wadström and Nordenskjöld were expelled: J.A. Tulk does not appear on the list of those expelled according to Sibley.[4] After 1790 Tulk confines his activities to those of a non-sectarian nature, which was to translate, print and publish.

Figure A

To him the LORD appear'd in radiant Light,
Made him his SCRIBE, and taught him what to write:.

Towards the top is represented the Portrait of Emanuel Swedenborg, in a Medallion, supported by two Angels, and surrounded with bright rays of light. The Palm-Trees on the sides, are emblems of Victory in Temptations, and have also an allusion to *Africa*, where the above enlightened author, in his printed works and manuscripts, often affirms the New Church to be implanted.—Between the trees is suspended a curtain, with the title of the work, and under it an Altar, adorned with garlands of flowers, on which are two Doves, representing *Conjugal Love*. At the sides are seen Rocks, with smooth and clear Water, the Correspondence of Truth.

Figure B



CIDARIS ERIT AFRICO.

Vide N°. 114. DELITIÆ SAPIENTIÆ de AMORE CONJUGIALI.

Explanation of the Subject of the Plate taken from one of the memorable Relations in the Treatise on Conjugal Love.

A Convocation of Angels being assembled in the World of Spirits, several Angelic Spirits, selected from among the learned of the different kingdoms of Europe, appeared there to deliver their sentiments on *the true origin, virtue, and power, of Conjugal Love*: A golden Mitre, richly adorned with diamonds and other precious stones being the prize or reward to be assigned to him who should give the best definition on this important subject. It was found that the Christians, from the different nations, had no proper idea concerning it: A band of Africans, who had stood silent at some distance from the golden table whereon the prize was laid, (and had heard the different opinions relative to the point in question,) modestly advanced forward, and desired leave to speak;—he had no sooner ended, than an Angel appeared in the East, and a voice from heaven was heard saying

The Mitre shall be for the African.

He issued English editions of Index to Apocalypse Revealed(1797) and the Summary Exposition(1800). Late in the nineteenth century we find him associated with the London Society for Printing.

There are several causes which could lead to expulsion or withdrawal of interest in the East Cheap Society. Tulk expresses his feelings in a brief Letter, [5] which no doubt reflect the feelings of the other members to a greater or leser degree. He is critical of the move taken in matters of ordination, preferring to preserve the apostolic succession and thus wait until those clergy of the established church enter the New Church to become its priests. His sympathies appear to lie with the non-separatists who sought for an idealistic view of Swedenborg's New Church. God's dispensation was seen to be universal and embraced the whole of Christendom. There was equal disquiet over the question of liturgies, hymnals and a catechism. There was a feeling that such steps could easily lead to a conservative position within the New Church. Other dissenting bodies had found themselves in such a situation: would the New Church be any different?

There was also the question of interpreting the sections of Swedenborg's Conjugal Love concerning 'concubinage'.[6] Nordenskjöld and others were very much in favour of its introduction within the established New Church. Augustus Nordenskjöld was reported to have carried out the life style which he believed could be found in the theology. His justification for his action is his reference to Swedenborg taking a mistress when in Italy.[7] So we find Nordenskjöld drawing up a plan for living by New Church folk, putting into practice the doctrines of Swedenborg. Those in the East Cheap Society would commend the practical application to life of the doctrines, save the doctrinal aspect on concubinage being stressed by Nordenskjöld. And no

doubt it was this aspect of the plan that caused the supporters of it to be expelled. In a comment written a few years before his death, Servanté speaks of the 'conservative majority' in the East Cheap Society, and that they were 'bigotted'.[8] It is possible that this last point refers directly to the publication of the New Jerusalem Magazine and his editorship. It could also reflect the attitude of the East Cheap Society on the matter of understanding and interpreting Swedenborg's writings. In the old Theosophical Society there was freedom of expresion rather than the dogmatic presentation that was creeping into the Society, following the First General Conference.

Two matters need to be noted in association with Blake. He would have met all those who were expelled, and his sympathies would certainly lie more with them even though like them he attended the First General Conference. He would not see the East Cheap Society as the only expression of the New Church on earth, especially with the growing interest in organisational details. His vision would have been that of the universal New Christian Church. Further, he would deplore any thought of dogmatism in an association which proclaimed that 'now it was allowable to enter with the understanding into the things of faith'.[9] The sexual debate which went on in the Society, caused the Committee Members to tear out the minutes of the period from their Minute Book.[10] The situation did give rise to an unattributed story of Blake proposing to take a concubine. Mrs. Blake is said to have cried at the suggestion and Blake gave up the plan.[11] It should be noted that Blake's theoretical approval of free love, revealed in his writings, is far more liberal than any Swedenborgian attitude. Certainly there is no evidence that Blake planned to take a concubine, or indulged in free love, or was ever unfaithful to his wife.

Although there is no documentary evidence of a connection between the London Universal Society and Blake, it does seem likely that he was aware of the conflict, and would share the views of the members in their criticism of the East Cheap Church's institutional conservatism. It is known that Tulk, father and son, did support Blake, which no doubt arose from their shared interest in Swedenborg, Tulk's approach will become apparent in an examination of Blake's Swedenborgian patrons.

In the postscript to the prospectus or 'design' of the new publication the New Jerusalem Magazine, mention is made of one of the editors being the possessor of "all the original manuscripts of Emanuel Swedenborg, now in Stockholm, whose legal right to the same has lately been determined in his favour'.[12] It was hoped to print some of them in due course.

A translation from Conjugal Love was attached to the issues of the New Jerusalem Magazine: the translation goes as far as paragraph 55, and there is no mention of concubinage. There was an article in the May issue, 'Concerning the Correspondence of the Married State with the Doctrine and Conjunction of Goodness and Truth', which concluded, 'Thus the book Conjugal Love is written for the man, for it is he that is to combat against cold, and the wife is to be his aid'.[13] Again there is no mention in the article of concubinage.

There is a translation, by Nordenskjöld himself, of his 'Plan of a Consistonum Ecclestasticum'[14], but in it the subject of concubinage is not raised.

There is also confusion to be found among Blakean scholarship on the title of Conjugial Love. It is thought that Conjugal Love which appears in the periodical translation is another work from that issued by Clowes under the title Conjugial Love. The former is a translation of

paragraphs 1-55, while the latter is a full translation of the work Swedenborg wrote entitled de Amore Conjugiali and published in Latin in 1768.

It is often assumed that Servanté was the translator, since he was the publisher of the magazine. But Dr. William Ross Woofenden, after an examination of the installments that appear in the 1790 periodical with the 1794 publication concluded, 'although the translation of the text differs markedly in any number of places, the footnotes and other critical commentary - all supplied by the translator - are verbatim ac litteratim'.[15] The translation of Conjugal Love which appears in the periodical may well be Clowes' first draft. When he issued the completed translation he gave it the title Conjugial Love, so coining a special technical word to express Swedenborg's unique concept of marriage love. The change in title may also reflect his own feelings in opposition to those of Nordenskjöld.

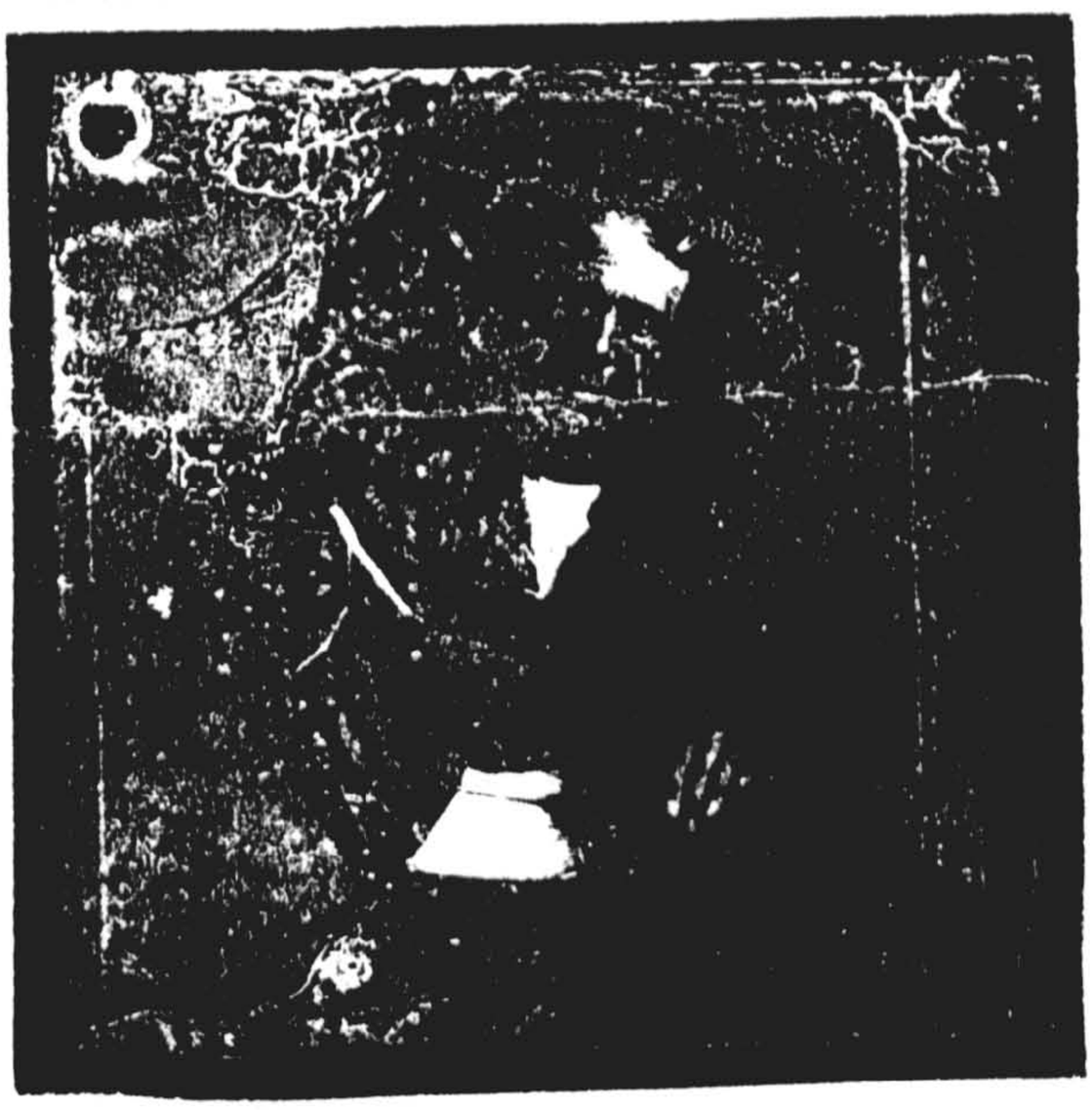
10. Swedenborgian Patrons

Blake was a master craftsman. For much of his life he depended on commissions from others and on patronage. He did some engraving and printing himself for sale to the public. Several of his patrons had Swedenborgian associations, either as supporters of the movement or as readers of the works of Swedenborg. These patrons do not appear to give the fullest support to Hindmarsh and the Conference, but are more inclined to the non-separatist movement.

John Flaxman was an active supporter of the Swedenborg movement, though he appears to have withdrawn his support from the Conference body due to the attitudes prevailing in the East Cheap Society. Later he was an active member of the Church Committee of the Cross Street Society, Hatton Garden , under the ministry of the Rev. Joseph Proud. He was also to become active in the work of the London Printing Society along with C.A.Tulk. Flaxman also helped to fund the printing of Blake's Poetical Sketches, and sought to secure commissions and patrons for him. Such a patron was William Hayley.

Hayley was a patron of John Flaxman and George Romney, the artist. He had an illegitimate son, born in 1780, called Thomas Alphonso Hayley, who had an early inclination towards the arts.[1] In 1794 Romney can write, 'dear Tom discovers a growing passion for the noble art of sculpture'.[2] At the time Flaxman was making ready for his return from Rome, and he wrote to Hayley offering to instruct the young lad. So in February 1795 Tom was apprenticed to Flaxman. Tom was obviously happy with the arrangement for he speaks of Flaxman as a 'good friend, good artist, good man good every thing that can be named'.[3] However, within eighteen months Tom fell ill and had to return home to his father. When he regained his strength he returned again to Flaxman.

Memorial tablet to John Augustus Tulk designed by Flaxman and found in the Kensington Society of the New Church, Pembridge Villas, Westbourne, London.



John Augustus Tulk

By 1797 Hayley had built the Marine Turret at Felpham, a project he had discussed with his son Tom during the lad's illness. In March 1798, with the loss of the use of his legs, Tom was paralyzed, and Hayley was conscious that his son was dying. At the time, Hayley was busy on his Essay on Sculpture, a series of verse epistles addressed to Flaxman, for which Tom had drawn 'The Death of Demosthenes'. To engrave this and a vignette of Tom's head as decoration for the printed poem, Flaxman recommended his needy friend Blake. Hayley was much impressed with the 'outline of dear Tom's Demosthenes', though not too happy with the engraving of Tom at the age of sixteen, from a medallion by Flaxman. Hayley suggested improvement on the engraving, which Blake was willing to do. Tom died on 2 May 1800 at the age of nineteen years, five months. Some four days later Blake wrote to Hayley with the engraved vignette of Tom, expressing his feelings as follows:

> I am very sorry for your immense loss,which is a repetition of what all feel in this valley of misery & happiness mixed. I send the Shadow of the departed Angel: the likeness is improved. I know that our deceased friends are more really with us than when they were apparent to our mortal part.[4]

The letter then goes on to affirm Blake's spiritual companionship with his brother Robert, who had died some three weeks earlier, aged nineteen years.

These sentiments must have moved Hayley, for in July, after hearing of Blake's 'melancholy', suggested that he travel down to the Turret. This Blake did to undertake the commission of working on a new picture of Tom from the self portrait in crayon, as well as engraving a portrait of Tom by Romney.

From their meeting Hayley warmed to his 'good, enthusiastic friend' Blake, and Blake warmed to him. Hayley speaks glowingly of Blake's feeling for his lost son, for no doubt Blake had met the lad

when visiting Flaxman. The upshot of all this was Blake and family (his unmarried sister joined them) moving down to Felpham. 'Now Begins a New Life', Blake was to write to Flaxman.[5]

Blake enjoyed his sojourn at Felpham: he was interested in Milton, and the Turret Library contained a fine collection of Milton's works. It could well be that in conversation Swedenborgian thoughts were discussed. In writing to Hayley, in February, 1784, Flaxman comments: 'Pray when you have a favourable opportunity, let me have Swedenborg'.[6] There is a hint here that William Hayley may well be a reader of Swedenborg, and his contact was no doubt through Flaxman.

John Tulk had attended with his wife the First General Conference of the New Church at which Blake and his wife were present. Tulk also signs his name to the minutes, and appears in many ways to be an active supporter of the Swedenborgian movement. He had a young son, Charles Augustus Tulk, who was three years of age at the time of the Conference. Charles Tulk was a leisured gentleman with political and educational interest, as well as following his father's interest in Swedenborg. He served as a Member of Parliament (1820-26 and 1835-37) and was a country Magistrate for Middlesex (1836-47). His interest in social matters is reflected in his newspaper articles in which he argued for better conditions in factories, with a special interest in prisons and asylums. C.A.Tulk refused to join the sectarian movement, preferring instead the Sunday discussion on Swedenborg's works in his own home. He believed passionately in the teachings of Swedenborg, but saw them as foundational tenets for all rather than being confined to a single organisation. He was of the opinion that the sectarian movement would impede the development of the New Church. The many publications associated with his name show how he felt the dissemination of ideas was

Charles A. Tulk

important.[7] In this approach he would find an ally in Blake. John Flaxman was a friend of Tulk, and they examined the Swedenborg skull together in 1819. Tulk reports that 'Mr. Flaxman observed that the skull was worthy of (having a cast made) for its mere beauty'.[8] Indeed, Tulk commissioned Flaxman to make a cameo of Swedenborg for him.[9] There was also strong links of friendship between the Tulks and the Flaxmans and the poet Coleridge.[10] By 1816 Flaxman persuaded Tulk to patronize Blake. The actual patronage is found in the mention of 'our Friend' in a letter Nancy Flaxman writes to her husband. It is accepted that Tulk is the person in question.[11]

> I have had some discourse with our Friend about Blake's book & the little drawings - It is true he did not give him anything for he thought It would be wrong to do so after what pass'd between them, for as I understand B-- was very violent. Indeed beyond all credence only that he has served you his best friend the same trick (some) time back as you must well remember - but he bought a drawing from him.[12]

The little drawings cannot be identified, but Tulk did buy a drawing, and this in 1816. Further we know that in 1818 Tulk had purchased a copy of the Songs, for he loaned it to Coleridge, inviting comments and observations.[13] We know that Tulk's copy of Poetical Sketches bears Blake's personal inscription, something he reserved for those with whom he had a feeling of friendship.[14] He also owned a copy of No Natural Religion. If Tulk is regarded as the author of the article, 'The Inventions of William Blake, Painter and Poet', which appeared in the London University Magazine for 1830, then its extensive use of quotations from Book of Thel shows that he owned a copy of that also.[15] Added to this, is the claim by Tulk's daughter Caroline that 'William Blake, the Poet & Painter, with his wife, were rescued from destitution by Mr. C.A. Tulk.'[16]

In September 1816 Samuel Taylor Coleridge met Tulk at

Littlehampton, and their correspondence extends until 1826. Tulk sent Coleridge a copy of Blake's Songs; Coleridge returns the copy with a commentary on February 12, 1818.[17] In the commentary Coleridge links Blake with the 'scholars of Emanuel Swedenborg!'[18] In an earlier letter to H.F.Cary, Coleridge understands Blake to be 'a Swedenborgian'.[19] Tulk and Coleridge 'used to write newspaper articles on behalf of the workers in factories, children especially".[20] Coleridge was also to write on the mind of Swedenborg, if he could be given £200 by Tulk.[21] Further, we have the comment from J.J.Garth Wilkinson, who was known intimately to Tulk, that Tulk took Coleridge to see Blake's picture of the 'Last Judgment', and "the author of Christabel poured forth concerning it a flood of eloquent commentary and enlargement".[22] Spilling also reported in his articles on Blake in the New Church Magazine that,

> Dr. Garth Wilkinson tells that Charles A. Tulk averred that Blake told him that he wrote it ('The Divine Image') in the New Jerusalem Church, Hatton Garden .[23]

There is a mistake here, since the date of the writing of the poem is earlier than the opening of Hatton Garden Church.[24] Still, the truth as received is being faithfully recorded, that we cannot doubt, Tulk, Wilkinson or Spilling. By way of support to the meeting of Coleridge and Blake, with Tulk as the mutual friend, we have the record of Henry Crabb Robinson. In writing to Dorothy Wordsworth on February 19, 1826 he records: 'Coleridge has visited B. & I am told talks finely about him'.[25]

Mention has been made of Tulk's interest in publishing, especially journals of a Swedenborgian interest. He was the editor and publisher of The Dawn of Light and Theological Inspector, which was only issued monthly during 1825. This publication may well have arisen from

Tulk's own disputes with the editors of the Intellectual Repository who were not happy about his unorthodox Swedenborgian views. Tulk includes two of Blake's poems, 'The Divine Image' and 'On Another's Sorrow'. It was rare for Blake's poems to appear in letterpress during his lifetime.[26] Malkin and Crabb Robinson had each reproduced some of Blake's poems in their articles.[27] Tulk reproduces "The Divine Image" on the last page for April, 1825, and "On Another's Sorrow" on the last page for July, 1825.[28] Both poems are printed with no reference to the author, which was not unusual in this publication.

Tulk was associated with the newly formed London University, and his name appears as one of the 'Proprietors', which was to say that like thousands he contributed capital for the institution's foundation.[29] At a proprietors meeting it was announced that a gift of Swedenborg's Writing was to be given to the institution from the Swedenborg Society for Printing, of which Tulk was himself on the governing body. The gift was received with laughter, and so reported in the newspapers.[30] This could have made Tulk hesitant about putting his name to the article on Blake which appears in the London University Magazine for 1830. In the article mention was made of Blake meeting Coleridge, and the likely person who could have known this was Tulk himself. Further, there is a similarity in style of the brief article which appeared in The Times concerning the death of Flaxman. Here mention is made that 'his religious sentiments had for many years been framed entirely on the doctrines of Swedenborg.'[31] This article is 'from a Correspondent', but the editors of the Intellectual Repository think 'they recognise the pen of their avowed friend of those doctrines, the President of the London Printing Society'.[32]

Tulk was friendly with Garth Wilkinson who reported to Spilling

that Tulk related the following:

> "Blake" says Dr. Wilkinson, "informed Tulk that he had two different states, one in which he liked Swedenborg's writings, and one in which he disliked them. The second was a state of pride in himself, and then they were distastful to him, but afterwards he knew that he had not been wise and sane. The first was a state of humility in which he received and accepted Swedenborg".[33]

Further, Wilkinson was to prepare a letter press edition of Blake's Songs.[34] Twelve copies were printed by Tulk, following the original edition, that is to say, pages were left blank for the purchaser to copy the coloured pictures as found in the Blake edition. On one such copy of unbound sheets, Wilkinson writes:

> This copy of Blake's Songs of Innocence and Experience was printed by Mr. Charles Augustus Tulk, a Friend of Blake's and a dear friend of my Wife's and mine - and spaced as in the Original, in order that any one who chose, might copy in the paintings with which the original is adorned. Twelve copies only were printed.
> April 9 1886 - J.J. Garth Wilkinson[35]

The object of this publication appears to be that Tulk wished to distribute copies to his friends who showed a special interest in Blake's original designs. Tulk is still expresing his support of Blake in 1844, when he again published 'The Divine Image' in The New Church Advocate, a short-lived periodical founded and edited by Tulk.

Such support of Blake shows how Tulk contributed to keeping the name of Blake alive after his death. It could well be that Blake's moderating attitude towards Swedenborg at the end of his days, reflects his association with Tulk. Like Tulk, Blake saw theology centred on Christ, as the Divine Human, and Jerusalem gives expression to Tulk's own theological position. Dr. Raymond Deck observes that, 'Tulk may have learned from Blake the idealistic interpretation of Swedenborg's theology which Tulk began to promulgate at about the time of his first patronage of the poet'.[36]

Section 3: Blake's opinion of Swedenborg

11: Swedenborgian works available to Blake

12: Blake's Swedenborgian annotations:

(a) Heaven and Hell

(b) Divine Love and Wisdom

(c) Divine Providence

11. Swedenborgian works available to Blake

An examination will now be made of the works of Swedenborg in English translation which Blake could have possessed. Edwin Ellis created a legend around Blake and made him in his own image in The Real Blake.[1] He is responsible for the thought that Blake had grown up in a Swedenborgian household. There is no evidence for this, and all that we know of his father is that he was a Protestant and a Dissenter.[2] Further Ellis credits the family with a library of Swedenborgian books, many of which had not been translated into English at the time when Blake is said to have read them. But Blake did have a number of Swedenborg works, for copies have survived which contain his name on the fly leaf, and these he must have read for they contain his own annotations.

William Bell Scott, who was acquainted with James John Garth Wilkinson, doubted that Blake had sufficient learning or mental temperament to read Paracelsus or Swedenborg, which William Rossetti had claimed.[3] Though Blake was guarded about the ignorance of his education, and he may have a most childlike manhood, he was nonetheless a man of great determination. In a letter to his brother James he expressed the desire to have learned languages at an earlier age.[4] Tatham speaks of Blake having "a most consummate knowledge of all the great writers in all languages". This may be exaggeration on Tatham's part, but he further states in the letter to Francis Harvey, who had purchased what was to be called the 'Pickering MS'[5]

> I may say that I have possessed books well thumbed and dirty by his graving hands, in Latin, Greek, Hebrew, French, and Italian, besides a large collection of works of the[6] mystical writers, Jacob Behmen, Swedenborg and others.

This would go to disprove the comments of W.B. Scott; and it might well

EMANUEL SWEDENBORG

According to Hyde's *Bibliography of Swedenborg's Works*, this is a copy of a painting made of Swedenborg by P. Krafft, the elder, about 1768-70, when Emanuel was about eighty. The original oil was presented to Count A. J. von Höpken, a longtime personal friend of Swedenborg. Sharp-eyed Latin scholars will note two errors in the title of the book held by the author (*Relevata* instead of *Revelata*, and *ipsi* instead of *ibi*).

be the basis which allowed Ellis to claim many volumes for Blake's Swedenborgian library. Blake must have been able to have the loan of books from the libraries of friends over some time, or to be able to consult them freely. The allusions in his work show an intimate awareness of the thoughts of others. His name appears on a number of 'subscription lists' which reflects his personal interest in the works and the friends who wrote them.[7] This interest would also confirm that he had a library of his own.[8] Geoffrey Keynes cites for certain seventeen books from Blake's library, using as his criterion either Blake's signature on the fly leaf or his personal annotations.[9] Of these works we find two are English translations of Swedenborg's works. Over the years, since Keynes wrote his article, other books have come to light, including another by Swedenborg.

The annotated books in Blake's own hand show that he read, studied and made comments on what exercised his mind. This would give rise to the formulation of Blake's 'own system', of which he was the originator rather than having to rely on the systems of others. This above all is the mark of the educated man: not the book learning but the application of the things learned to life itself.

Of the annotated books which have survived, there are now three by Swedenborg. These are Heaven and Hell, Divine Love and Wisdom and Divine Providence. Blake also makes reference to a further two works, in his comments, though these books have not yet come to light. These are True Christian Religion, which he mentions in the Descriptive Catalogue, and Earths in the Universe, mentioned by Blake in his annotations to Heaven and Hell. Another two works have been claimed for his Swedenborgian library, but the veracity of these needs to be examined. The books in question are Apocalypse Revealed and Conjugial

TRUE CHRISTIAN RELIGION;

CONTAINING

THE UNIVERSAL THEOLOGY

OF THE

NEW CHURCH:

WHICH WAS FORETOLD BY THE LORD,

In DANIEL, Chap. vii. 5. 13, 14. and in The APOCALYPSE, Chap. xxi. 1, 2.

By *EMANUEL SWEDENBORG*,
Servant of the Lord JESUS CHRIST.

NOW FIRST TRANLSATED FROM THE ORIGINAL LATIN.

Son of Man, What is that Proverb which ye have in the Land of Iſrael, ſaying, The Days are prolonged, and every Viſion faileth?

Tell them therefore, thus ſaith the Lord God; I will make this Proverb to ceaſe, and they ſhall no more uſe it as a Proverb in Iſrael; but ſay unto them, The Days are at Hand, and the Effect of every Viſion.

EZECH. xii. 22, 23.

VOLUME II.

LONDON:

SOLD BY J. PHILLIPS, GEORGE-YARD, LOMBARD-STREET; ALSO BY J. DENIS & SON, No. 2, NEW-BRIDGE STREET, NEAR THE OBELISK, FLEET-STREET.
MDCCLXXXI.

Title page : True Christian Religion
Blake no doubt possessed a copy of this work

CONCERNING THE

EARTHS

IN OUR

SOLAR SYSTEM,

WHICH ARE CALLED

PLANETS;

AND CONCERNING THE

Earths in the Starry Heaven;

TOGETHER WITH

An ACCOUNT of their INHABITANTS,

AND ALSO OF THE

SPIRITS and ANGELS there;

From what hath been SEEN and HEARD.

Now first translated from the LATIN of

The Hon. EMANUEL SWEDENBORG.

Published at LONDON by the AUTHOR, in the Year 1758.

LONDON:

Printed and Sold by R. HINDMARSH, No. 32, Clerkenwell-Close.

Sold also by J. BUCKLAND, Pater-noster-Row; J. DENIS, New Bridge-Street, Fleet-Street; W. BROWN, Corner of Essex-Street, Strand; J. CUTHELL, Middle-Row, Holborn; I. CLARKE, and I. HASLINDEN, Manchester; T. MILLS, Bristol; and may be had by giving Orders to any of the Booksellers in Town and Country.

M.DCC.LXXXVII.

Title page : Earths in the Universe
Blake may have possessed a copy of this work

THE

APOCALYPSE

REVEALED,

WHEREIN

ARE DISCLOSED

THE

ARCANA THERE FORETOLD,

WHICH

HAVE HITHERTO REMAINED

CONCEALED.

NOW

FIRST TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL LATIN

OF

EMANUEL SWEDENBORG.

PUBLISHED

AT AMSTERDAM, M.DCC.LXVI.

VOL. II.

MANCHESTER,

PRINTED BY C. WHEELER, MDCCXCI.

SOLD BY MESSRS. G. G. J. AND J. ROBINSON, PATER-NOSTER-ROW,
AND BY R. HINDMARSH, CLERKENWELL-CLOSE, LONDON;
BY T. MILLS, BOOKSELLER, BRISTOL; AND BY
J. AND W. CLARKE, MANCHESTER.

Title page : Apocalypse Revealed
Blake may have possessed a copy of this work

Love. Considering that at the time of Blake's interest in Swedenborg, not all the writer's works had been translated, the influence of Swedenborg on Blake's writing and thought is not something to be dismissed lightly.

In 1789 Hindmarsh printed the Minutes of the First General Conference, and he attached a list of books available in translation (see illustration A). From this we see that Blake could have purchased Heaven and Hell, Divine Love and Wisdom, and Divine Providence. Mention is also made in the list of True Christian Religion, and Earths in the Universe. But absent from the list are Apocalypse Revealed and Conjugial Love.

Of the surviving works Divine Love and Wisdom is the translation by N. Tucker, and issued by the Society for Translating, Publishing and Circulating the Writings of Swedenborg, Manchester. The date is 1788, and Blake's copy is in the British Museum. Divine Providence was issued by the same Society in 1790 with a translation by N. Tucker and a long preface by John Clowes. Blake's copy is in the University Library, Cambridge. Heaven and Hell is the second edition, issued by the Manchester Society in 1784, of which half the print was taken by the Theosophical Society, London. This work was translated by William Cookworthy and revised, with a preface, by the Rev. Thomas Hartley. Blake's copy is lodged in the Harvard University Library.

When Blake and Coleridge met in 1825 or 1826, we know that they at least had one Swedenborgian book in common, namely, Divine Love and Wisdom. S.T. Coleridge's copy is the 1816 edition issued by the Society for Printing and Publishing the works of Emanuel Swedenborg, London, of which Tulk was a founding father.[10] Coleridge annotated this work.

LIST of BOOKS

PRINTED AND SOLD BY

R. HINDMARSH, Printer to His Royal Highneſs the PRINCE of WALES,

No. 32, CLERKENWELL-CLOSE, LONDON.

	£.	s.	d.
1. ARCANA CŒLESTIA			
2. True Chriſtian Religion, or the Univerſal Theology of the New Church —	0	15	0
3. A Treatiſe on the Nature of Influx, or of the Communication between Soul and Body	0	1	6
4. A Treatiſe concerning Heaven and Hell	0	4	0
5. Of the New Jeruſalem and it's Heavenly Doctrine — — —	0	4	0
6. The Doctrine of the New Jeruſalem concerning the Lord —— ——	0	2	0
7. The Doctrine of the New Jeruſalem concerning the Sacred Scripture ——	0	2	0
8. The Doctrine of Life for the New Jeruſalem	0	1	6
9. Of the Earths in the Univerſe —	0	2	6
10. The Pſalms of David, with a Summary Expoſition of the Internal Senſe —	0	3	0

11. Of

	£.	s.	d.
11. Of the White Horſe mentioned in the Revelation, Chap. XIX. with curious Remarks on the Souls of Beaſts, and the Life of Vegetables —— ——	0	1	0
12. An Eulogium delivered on the Death of the Author, &c. —— ——	0	0	6
13. A Summary View of the principal Doctrines contained in the Writings of Emanuel Swedenborg —— ——	0	1	6
14. A Treatiſe concerning the Laſt Judgment, and the Deſtruction of Babylon, which took Place in the Spiritual World in the Year 1757 —— ——	0	2	6
15. Angelic Wiſdom concerning Divine Love and Divine Wiſdom — ——	0	6	0
16. The Liturgy of the New Church, ſignified by the New Jeruſalem in the Revelation; including the Forms for the Adminiſtration of Baptiſm and the Holy Supper	0	1	0
17. Nine Queries concerning the Trinity, &c. with their Anſwers ——	0	0	3
18. A Short Account of the Hon. E. Swedenborg, and his Theological Writings ——	0	0	6
19. Extracts from the Manuſcripts of Emanuel Swedenborg —— ——	0	0	2

John Flaxman's copy of Apocalypse Revealed, is the translation by N. Tucker and was issued by the Manchester Printing Society in 1791.[11] Flaxman could have brought this volume to the notice of Blake after his return from Italy.

In the end sheets of Divine Love and Wisdom there is a list of books sold by Robert Hindmarsh. This edition was in the possession of William Blake. From this list (illustration B) we see that Conjugial Love was not available. Mention is made of A Sketch of the chaste Delights of Conjugial Love, and the impure Pleasures of Adulterous Love. This work is extracts from Apocalypse Explained paras 981-1010, and must not be confused with the work Conjugial Love, which was translated by the Rev. John Clowes and issued in 1794 by the Manchester Printing Society. When John Clowes did his translation of Delitiae Sapientiae De Amore Conjugiali he gave it the title Conjugial Love. In Latin conjugiale is the poetic form of conjugale, though the meaning of both forms is taken to be the same. Prior to Clowe's translation the work is cited as Conjugal Love. Thus Clowes coined a new word in English to express the usage of a special technical word, the poetic form, to denote Swedenborg's unique concept of marriage love.

Extracts from Conjugal Love appeared in serial form attached to the monthly instalments of New Jerusalem Magazine for 1790, published by the London Universal Society.[12] The translation is often attributed to Henry Servanté, the editor of the publication.[13] The three parts which appeared, covering the first fifty-four paragraphs, were subsequently bound into a volume and issued as The Delights of Wisdom Respecting Conjugal Love. There is an anonymous Preface which hints, without actually stating, the practice of concubinage as advocated by some of those expelled from the East Cheap Society. In part, the Preface reads:

LIST of BOOKS

SOLD BY R. HINDMARSH, PRINTER TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE OF WALES, No. 32, CLERKENWELL-CLOSE, LONDON.

	£.	s.	d.
1. ARCANA CŒLESTIA, Vol. 1, 2, 3, 4	1	5	6
2. A Brief Exposition of the Doctrine of the New Church; or a Contrast between the Faith of the Old, and the Faith of the New Church — —	0	1	3
3. True Christian Religion, or the Universal Theology of the New Church —	0	15	0
4. A Treatise on the Nature of Influx, or of the Communication between Soul and Body	0	1	6
5. A Treatise concerning Heaven and Hell	0	6	0
6. Of the New Jerusalem and it's Heavenly Doctrine — — —	0	4	0
7. The Doctrine of the New Jerusalem concerning the Lord — —	0	2	0
8. The Doctrine of the New Jerusalem concerning the Sacred Scripture —	0	2	0
9. The Doctrine of Life for the New Jerusalem	0	1	6
10. Of the Earths in the Universe, and their Inhabitants — —	0	2	6
11. The Psalms of David, with a Summary Exposition of the Internal Sense —	0	3	0
12. Of the White Horse mentioned in the Revelation, Chap. XIX. with curious Remarks on the Souls of Beasts, and the Life			

	£.	s.	d.
13. A Treatise concerning the Last Judgment, and the Destruction of Babylon, which took Place in the Spiritual World in the Year 1757 — — —	0	2	6
14. Angelic Wisdom concerning Divine Love and Divine Wisdom — — —	0	6	
15. Angelic Wisdom concerning Divine Providence — — —	0	7	6
16. The Liturgy of the New Church, Including the Forms for the Administration of Baptism and the Holy Supper —	0	2	6
17. Minutes of a General Conference of the Members of the New Church, held in Great East-Cheap, London, in April, 1789 — —	0	0	6
18. A Sketch of the chaste Delights of Conjugal Love, and the impure Pleasures of Adulterous Love — — —	0	1	0
19. Extracts concerning the Lord's Prayer, and it's Internal Sense — —	0	0	6
20. An Eulogium delivered on the Death of the Author, &c. — —	0	0	6
21. A Short Account of the Hon. E. SWEDENBORG, and his Theological Writings	0	0	6
22. Jehovah's Mercy, a Poem, recommending the Writings of the Hon. E. SWEDENBORG, by J. PROUD, — —	0	0	2
23. Nine Queries concerning the Trinity, &c. with their Answers —	0	0	3
24. Extracts from the Manuscripts of E. S.	0	0	1

> In the following work the author likewise proves, the most satisfactory and clear manner, that true Conjugial Love can only subsist between husband and one wife, and thus cautions the mind against that dangerous and Antichristian doctrine of a plurality of wives, which has lately been propagated and confirmed from certain passages of the Old Testament falsely understood[14].

The suggestion has been made that John Clowes may be the translator of the extracts which appeared in the New Jerusalem Magazine. Clowes was certainly in sympathy with the non-separatists, the majority of whom were found in the London Universal Society. And his character would suggest that he would be out of sympathy with those within the Society who were advocating concubinage. So the tone of the Preface might well suggest the name of John Clowes. The extracts would then be the beginnings of his translation, which when completed urged him to change the title of the work to Conjugial Love. Clowes was certainly not averse to publishing his work anonymously.[15]

Mark Schorer makes the comment in his work on Blake, "a scandal rocked the community and Blake was surely interested and may well have entered into the controversy. It was a perverted view of Swedenborg's doctrine of concubinage in his work Conjugial Love."[16] Morris cites the passage and assumes that Blake had a copy of the work in question.[17] This may well be so, for the subject matter interested Blake. There is an unattributed story of Blake desiring to take a concubine, in the form of a young maid, but his wife Catherine was distressed by the thought; Blake does not pursue the matter further.[18]

But Blake's copy of Conjugial Love has yet to come to light. He certainly goes well beyond the thought of Swedenborg on the subject, in his expressions of free love. He sees positive goodness in the fulfilment of desire. "He who desires but acts not, breeds pestilence'.[19]

There is much in Blake's work to suggest that he was an uncomplicated exponent of free love. But humanity appears to be 'bound' in its sexuality, rather than in freedom. The powerful drive towards possessiveness and domination may appear to be what constitutes human sexuality, but in that there is the lack of freedom either on the part of the dominating or the dominated. What could be delightful in human sexuality, is bound up with its exclusive and potentially destructive element. This may be closer to Blake's understanding, for in a poem in the 'Pickering Manuscript' there is presented a picture of 'William Bond', who could be Blake himself, and the bonds that tie him to his betrothed 'Mary', whilst being tempted by other women, and in particular one woman for whom he threatens to leave Mary:

> For thou art Melancholy Pale
> And on thy Head is the cold Moons shine
> But she is ruddy & bright as day
> And the sun beams dazzle from her eyne[20]

As Mary collapses so does William Bond have pity on her, sensing that tenderness and sympathy are greater than passion, and are the more enduring and the truly essential aspects of love.

> I thought Love livd in the hot sun shine
> But O he lives in the Moony light
> I thought to find love in the heat of day
> But sweet Love is the Comforter of Night.
>
> Seek Love in the Pity of others Woe
> In the gentle relief of another's care
> In the darkness of night & the winters snow
> In the naked outcast seek Love there.[21]

If such feelings do reflect Blake's own personal sentiments, then it would give a little credence to the story recalled for the first time by Mona Wilson in her life of Blake, of Blake desiring to take a concubine and Catherine being very distressed at the thought.[22]

H.N.Morris also makes this comment in his article of 1928,

> Blake must have read Swedenborg's Heaven and Hell, with

> close attention. It had been published in English when he was twenty-one. It is surprising that no annotated copy has come to light.[23]

This observation would account for Geoffrey Keynes not including Heaven and Hell in his list of books in Blake's library, bearing in mind his own criterion for entry. Mention is made however, along with the annotations, as a supplement to his later Blake Complete Writings.[24] It should be noted that by way of comment, before writing his annotations in the margins of Divine Love and Wisdom, Blake writes on the title page the note 'H. & Hell chapter 425'. This would show his awareness of the work Heaven and Hell. The work having come to light there is now confirmation for Morris's assumption. In the article Morris further states that Blake also had copies of the Four Leading Doctrines of the New Jerusalem; that is, Doctrine of the Word, the Doctrine of Life, the Doctrine of Faith, and the Doctrine of the Sacred Scriptures.[25] Certainly these smaller works were available in the earliest book list of Swedenborgian volumes in translation and sold by Robert Hindmarsh. None of these works has been discovered with Blake's name on the flyleaf, or his annotations, to show that he possessed and read the books. However, Morris's assumption may well be valid, for Divine Love and Wisdom which Blake read very closely, makes mention of Doctrine of the Lord, Doctrine of Life and Doctrine of the Sacred Scriptures, along with mention of Heaven and Hell, Divine Providence andArcana Caelestia.

There is also the possibility, that Blake may have had a goodly number of Swedenborg's works, but these were among some of the material burnt by Tatham. Blake's widow left all her husband's material to Tatham, and it is said that he destroyed that which he was not happy about.[26]

On all available evidence the Swedenborgian works read by Blake

and found to be in his library are Heaven and Hell, Divine Love and Wisdom and Divine Providence. Circumstantial evidence, and an internal examination of his poems and drawings reveal that other works, such as True Christian Religion and Earths in the Universe, were no doubt known to Blake, and possibly possessed by him. For the rest of Swedenborgian works attributed to Blake's Library, the evidence is speculative. Until more substantial evidence is found scholars must content themselves with basing the Swedenborgian-Blake connection on the material to hand. Fortunately all the authenticated Swedenborgian works bearing Blake's name and annotations are lodged in accessible Library collections, rather than in private hands, which was the case seventy-five years ago.

12. Blake's Swedenborgian annotations

Three copies of Swedenborg's works survive today which were used by Blake himself.[1] These are the 1784 edition of Heaven and Hell, the 1788 edition of Divine Love and Wisdom, and the 1790 edition of Divine Providence. Other works may have been in his possession, for example, True Christian Religion and Earths in the Universe for indirect reference can be found relating to them.[2] There are no extant copies of these works with either Blake's signature on the fly-leaf or comments on the text.

Blake's extensive comments are to be found in Divine Love and Wisdom and Divine Providence. As Inge Johnson expressed it:

> a temperamental reading with pen in hand.[3]

In the main Blake's comments are in pencil, though he is not averse to writing with crayon, if this is nearby at the time, as can be seen from an examination of the annotations in these works.

But his annotations reveal both enthusiasm and disillusionment in his attitude towards Swedenborg. The ambivalence in thought is reflected in Blake's continuing sympathy towards Swedenborg's spiritual vision, which excited the mystical and the artistic nature of Blake. Yet, Blake is ready to offer a challenge if the text is out of keeping with his own thoughts and ideas. He was no slave to the thoughts of others, but was ready to use them only when they served his purposes. Blake ever remains the independent thinker, even though the ideas of others may stimulate his mystical and artistic bent.

Swedenborg was the scientist and Blake the artist, so we should expect their outlook and perspectives to be different. The assumption is made by Swedenborg that the value of empirical descriptions of reality

lay in its relationship with reality itself. Thus, we find him arguing for a 'correspondence' rather than a direct identity of reality. With this approach it is easy to assume that in correspondences there is a mechanical action which can be explained rationally. Blake falls into the trap of seeing Swedenborg's correspondence as mechanical, though he is not afraid of using them. But Blake's use lies in this: he assumes that all descriptions of reality are mere metaphors for reality, and that the relationship between description and reality is poetic and not mechanical. The approach then of both is different from the other. In spite of Swedenborg's great personal achievement, it is not what Blake the artist wants or desires. Because of this it is easy to recognise how Blake could write The Marriage of Heaven and Hell as a counter work to what he had read in Swedenborg. Blake will not readily fall into accepting the system of another, either from blindness or diffidence to the achievements of another. Blake was his own man always.

Bearing this in mind it is not surprising to find an ambivalence on the part of Blake towards Swedenborg. C.A.Tulk has made the remark, which he said he had gathered from Blake, that when the artist had a feeling of pride within him, he would reject what Swedenborg had stated: when there was a feeling of humility on the part of Blake, then he would receive and accept Swedenborg willingly.[4] J.G. Davies has suggested that these words 'read more like a Swedenborgian apologia than the original utterance of the poet'.[5] This may be the appearance, but it should be remembered that Wilkinson, who was reporting the comments of Tulk, is not out to score points, or claim the Swedenborgian cause for Blake. As yet, Blake was not widely known. So some veracity should be given to these comments.[6] It was much later that Wilkinson himself was to publish Blake's Songs of Innocence, using

the copy that he had received from Tulk, who had himself received it from Blake.[7]

Blake's ambivalence towards Swedenborg cannot easily be dismissed, and it will be considered later. If Blake can accept Swedenborg's thought in youth, and then reject it in his Marriage of Heaven and Hell only to speak in glowing terms in his old age, there is clear indication that Blake neither totally rejects or accepts. Blake is his own master, not wanting to rely solely on the 'system of another'. But a man in his old age does not need to rely wholly on the adulation of others. He can speak the truth without fear or favour; and there is warmth in the comment of Blake towards Swedenborg, that all young artists should read him for inspiration.[8] As to Blake's feelings, when there was fire in his bones, the annotations speak loudly and clearly.

It is possible to speculate on the chronology of Blake's reading of Swedenborg. In his copy of Heaven and Hell, issued in 1784, we find few annotations, but in the 1788 publication of Divine Love and Wisdom there are profuse annotations. Between the reading of these two Swedenborgian works, Blake had read Lavater's Aphorisms on Man with great approval in 1788. The author had suggested that you place marks of approval or otherwise during the course of reading a book, so that others in reading the work might sense something of your feelings.[9] This Blake obviously did in his reading of Lavater's work, and the same when reading Divine Love and Wisdom, which contains extensive annotations.

When he began to read Divine Providence, he approached the work in the same manner. The work was issued in 1790 with a preface by the Rev. John Clowes, though this is not stated in the work itself. Blake

is not happy with the preface and suggests in his annotation: 'Is this not Predestination?' He then goes on further to write, 'Lies & Priestcraft'. It would be difficult to press the work as an indication of predestination, but that is the feeling of Blake and that feeling persists in the rest of his reading. Is there any reason for this?

As we have already seen there was a separation in the early New Church organisation, and the separatists introduced a priesthood and all the formal trappings of an ecclesiastical body. Blake saw the New Church 'as Active Life & not in Ceremonies at all', as his annotation to Divine Love and Wisdom, No. 220 shows. Maybe his comments represent a challenge and a disappointment to what he might have expected. The New Church was going the way of all churches, and Swedenborg 'strongest of men, the Samson shorn by the Churches'.[10]

A) Heaven and Hell

This work was first published in translation in 1778. In part the translator was William Cookworthy, and afterwards the work was revised and finished, with a preface being added, by the Rev. Thomas Hartley. The printing cost was covered by Mr. Cookworthy. There was a reprint, called the Second Edition, isued in 1784, when the cost of publication was defrayed by the Society for Printing, Publishing and Circulating the Writings of Swedenborg, Manchester. Half the printed edition was then taken by the Theosophical Society, London. William Blake's copy was this second edition, and it was a secondhand copy when he got it. The title page is signed by Blake in ink: alongside in pencil, in another hand, 'belonged to Blake the Artist'.

The original owner of the book had written on the half title page, in pencil:

> And as Imagination bodies forth in forms of things unseen turns them to shape & gives to airy Nothing a local habitation & a Name". Sh

As Geoffrey Keynes reminds us, this is a misquotation from A Midsummer Night's Dream v.1.

Blake springs to the defence of imagination by adding underneath the above quotation, in crayon:

> Thus Fools quote Shakespeare: The above is Theseus' opinion Not Shakespeare's. You might as well quote Satan's blasphemies from Milton & give them as Milton's Opinions.

This comment is longer than any other made by Blake in the body of the work.

Heaven and Hell is a work Swedenborg published in 1758 in Latin. It contains material found in the inter-chapter material of the Arcana Caelestia. In that year Swedenborg published five works in all, and much of the basic material was found in the inter-chapter material

William Blake

A

TREATISE

CONCERNING

HEAVEN AND HELL,

AND OF THE

Wonderful Things therein,

AS

HEARD AND SEEN;

BY THE HONOURABLE AND LEARNED

EMANUEL SWEDENBORG,

Of the SENATORIAL ORDER of NOBLES in the Kingdom of SWEDEN.

TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL LATIN.

THE SECOND EDITION.

Where there is no Vision, the people perish. Prov. xxix. 18.

The invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made. Rom. i. 20.

He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. Luke xiv. 35.

LONDON:

Printed by R. HINDMARSH, No. 32, Clerkenwell-Close;

And Sold by T. EVANS, and T. BUCKLAND, Paternoster-Row; J. DENIS and SON, New-Bridge-Street, Fleet-Street; J. CLARK, Manchester; T. MILLS, Wine-Street, Briſtol; S. HAZARD, Bath; and by all other Booksellers in Town and Country.

M, DCC, LXXXIV.

Title page : Heaven and Hell
with Blake's signature

TREATISE

CONCERNING

HEAVEN AND HELL,

AND OF THE

Wonderful Things therein.

[Price Four Shillings.]

of Arcana Caelestia.[1] Heaven and Hell is divided into three parts, the Preface, which covers the wonders of Heaven, the World of Spirits, and the final section, Hell.

Blake's comments are very brief, suggesting that he read this work before reading Lavater. Under paragraph 513, which is in the World of Spirits section, and is discussing the instruction given by angels, Blake adds,at the foot of the page, a mark alongside the paragraph:

> X See No 73 Worlds in Universe for account of Instructing Spirits.

This comment shows his awareness of one of the books published in 1758, which had been translated in 1787 by the Rev. John Clowes and issued by the Society for Printing, Publishing and Circulating the Writings of Swedenborg, Manchester. The work itself was never published with the title 'Worlds in the Universe', but always 'Earths in the Universe'. This may be a slip on Blake's part, for the word 'world' does appear in the passage and this may be to the forefront of Blake's mind.

In the English translation of Apocalypse Revealed, by N. Tucker, published by C. Wheeler in Manchester in 1791 and issued by the Manchester Printing Society, in the second volume there is a list of Swedenborg works given at paragraph 716. Here Earths in the Universe has been translated Worlds in the Universe. Does this suggest that Blake may have seen a copy of The Apocalypse Revealed noting the translation of the title? Erdman has speculated on another translation of the work at a later date, with Worlds in the Universe, as its title. There is no mention of such a translation with this title in Hyde's Bibliography. John Flaxman possessed a copy of Apocalypse Revealed, and he could have brought it to the notice of Blake.

The second passage in Heaven and Hell on which Blake makes an annotation is paragraph 588. The section under discussion is the number

of hells, which is found in the latter part of the work concerning Hell.

In the right-hand margin, he writes:

> under every Good is a hell, i.e. Hell is the outward or external of heaven & is of the body of the lord, for nothing is destroyed.

In this section, the subtitle is "The Appearance, situation, and number of the Hells'. Swedenborg states that objects appear in a similar way in the world of spirits as they do on earth. Thus there are mountains and plains, rocks and hills and valleys between them. The heavens will be found in the more elevated localities of the spiritual world, and in the world of spirits that of low lying localities, and under both are the hells. Here we see the comment of Blake that under every 'Good' there is a hell. He is as yet not pressing the point that Hell is only a mistake for Heaven, which we find in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell. He sees hell as the outward form of heaven. In this passage Swedenborg concludes, 'the entire heaven and the entire world of spirits are, as it were, excavated beneath and under them is a continuous hell'.

Blake, or the original owner of this copy of Heaven and Hell, scored in the left hand margin by erased pencil or finger nail, alongside paragraphs 333 and 334 concerning Little Children in Heaven. There are no further annotations by Blake to be found in this work.

B) Divine Love and Wisdom

This work was published in Latin in 1763 in Amsterdam. The English translation in the hands of Blake was that translated by N. Tucker and printed at the expense of the Society for Translation, Publishing and Circulation of the works of Swedenborg, Manchester, in 1788. It was printed and sold by W. Chalklen, Gracechurch Street, London.

The work can best be described as philosophical, treating as it does of the nature of Ultimate Reality. It treats also of the creation of the Universe. Because it includes references to God and his relation with man, it has a theological tone to it. Yet it is more philosophical than theological, though it is not the speculative philosophical approach that is found in books on philosophy today. The style is dogmatic, presenting what might be seen as dogma in a rational form. Revealed truths are those things which the human intellect cannot of itself discover, but they are not beyond the power of rational understanding to grasp them, once they are revealed. The subject matter and the presentation would excite Blake's enquiring mind.

The work falls into five distinct but related parts. Part I deals with the nature of Ultimate Reality, and thus of 'Being'. Part II discusses the process of creation from the Spiritual Sun. In Part III the doctrine of degrees is unfolded. Part IV sets out the doctrine of Uses. Part V expounds the nature of the being of man and the purpose of his creation. Blake's annotations cover the whole of the work and reveal that he studied it deeply. Some of the comments suggest that to Blake what was written was common sense, and well known to him before he began to read the work. It must be appreciated that Blake was searching for that which would confirm his own scheme of things, rather than

* *

ANGELIC

WISDOM.

* *

THE

WISDOM

OF

ANGELS,

CONCERNING

DIVINE LOVE

AND

DIVINE WISDOM.

TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL LATIN

OF THE

Hon. EMANUEL SWEDENBORG.

LONDON:

PRINTED AND SOLD BY W. CHALKLEY, CROOKS COURT,
POULTRY.

M.DCC.LXXXVIII.

Title page : Divine Love and Wisdom

Blake possessed a copy of this work and annotated it.

simply building on the ideas and thoughts of others, without due deliberation.

In this examination it will be helpful to give a short comment on the thought contained in the paragraph of Divine Love and Wisdom so as to appreciate the point Swedenborg is making. This will also help in the assessment of Blake's observations more accurately than the mere recording of his annotations.

On the flyleaf is written:

> There can be no Good-Will. Will is always Evil. It is pernicious to others or selfish. If God is anything he is Understanding. He is the Influx from that into the Will Thus Good to others or benevolent Understanding can (?& does) Work (?harm) ignorantly but never can ? the Truth (be ?evil) because Man is only Evil (when he wills . an untruth)
>
> H(eaven) & Hell Chapter 425

The substance is not a quotation but rather an observation on the content of the passage itself. Indeed, there is a twisting of the meaning by Blake in order to suit his own views. The passage has no marginal note in Blake's copy of Heaven and Hell.

Another comment by Blake, found on the flyleaf, reads:

> Understanding or Thought is not natural to Man it is acquired by means of Suffering & Distress i.e. Experience, Will, Desire, Love, Rage, Envy, & all other Affections are Natural. But Understanding is Acquired. But Observe. without these is to be less than Man. Man could ?never (have received) ?light from heaven ?without (aid of) the affections one would be ?limited in different periods of time.
>
> Wisdom of Angels 10

The first passage relates to Good-Will and Understanding, and the second passage from Wisdom of Angels takes up the subject of understanding. Again, this second passage is an observation rather than a quotation. Blake believed that understanding was not natural to man, and cannot be acquired, as Swedenborg had suggested, through knowledge. Understanding

is activity related to the whole man, in Blake's eyes. 'If God is anything, he is Understanding'. Swedenborg would say God is Love and Wisdom, Affection and Understanding. The problem of Will and Understanding is a subject Blake returns to many times in his annotations to this work.

Identification of the book from which this quotation is taken, entitled Wisdom of Angels, is most difficult. The phrase is akin to that found in the full title of Angelic Wisdom Concerning the Divine Love and Wisdom, and Angelic Wisdom Concerning the Divine Providence: and the spine title to Divine Love and Wisdom reads 'Angelic Wisdom'. Scholars often attribute the quotation to Divine Love and Wisdom 10, but it bears no relationship to the content of that paragraph. Divine Providence 10 could be related, for the subject matter is will and understanding. But Blake takes a different attitude towards Swedenborg in his reading of Divine Providence, whereas with Divine Love and Wisdom he is very positive.

James Hyde's A Bibliography of the Works of Emanuel Swedenborg, an exhaustive work recording all of Swedenborg's writing and various editions and versions, makes no reference of Wisdom of Angels. Mention is made of a work Wisdom's Dictates, which is a collection of maxims and observations concerning Divine and spiritual truths, compiled by Peter Provo in 1789. The extracts are in the form of paraphrases, but there is no mention of the quotation used by Blake.

PART ONE

Paragraph 1 (Page 2)

Swedenborg begins his work with a profound statement: 'Love is the Life of Man'. Here is a definition of life, which cannot in any way be reduced. The definition is not dogma but revealed truth, and man may confirm it for himself from experience. Man could not discover for himself, only confirm what is revealed to him. Thoughts, sensations and actions are not life but the effects of life. Therefore in proportion as the affection which is of love is cold, the thought, speech and action grows cold also. This man can confirm for himself from experience.

Blake's comment reads:

> They also percieve this from Knowledge, but not with the natural part.

Is Blake offering here a challenge? He hints that man may know from 'knowledge', but he then qualifies it "but not with the natural part'. Blake was opposed to the Deist position which sought to make 'natural religion' valid by making it intellectually respectable by the application of common sense. Blake recognises that common sense may indeed show the validity of knowledge, but what of the knowledge that could not be discovered in this way? Swedenborg says that man may confirm what is revealed and Blake appreciates that spiritual knowledge is at a different depth from that open to common sense. In his tractate There is no Natural Religion (First Series) Blake writes:

> 1. Man cannot naturally Percieve but through his natural or bodily senses.

In the Second Series of the same tractate he expands it to read:

> 1. Man's perceptions are not bounded by organs of perception; he percieves more than sense (tho' ever so acute) can discover.

Blake is accepting that spiritual knowledge is not discoverable by sense, but is revealed at another level, beyond the bounds set by sense perception. For Blake knowledge is immediate by Perception.

Paragraph 2 (Page 3)

The point being made here by Swedenborg is that thought, sensation and action are not life; they are the activities or effects of life. Thought is 'the first effect of life'. Without thought there could be no awareness, thus no consciousness. The second effect of life is 'sensation and action'. Without sensation there would be no sign of awareness, for we should be unconscious. Though there may be involuntary action in the body, it cannot properly be called "our' action.

But the essential idea contained in this paragraph is that thought is both internal and external and that there is interior thought still. 'Internal thought is the perception of ends', and this is properly'the first effect of life'.

Blake makes the comment:

This was known to me & thousands.

This would suggest that Blake has missed the importance of the paragraph, dismissing the final point made of 'interior' of the internal thought, or else he was wiser than many think. He may be recognising, as many at the time accepted, that there was an inner thought which was spiritual in dimension. Was not this thought the spark of "poetic genius'? To Blake 'the true man' is the Poetic Genius. Locke saw man in his natural body as a receiver of impressions from the external world. Blake, like Coleridge, recognised that man had an active and creative facility, which he later called "Imagination'. Here activity

not passivity was the creative element.

Paragraph 7 (Page 7)

'The Divine or God is not in space', which is the title of this paragraph, challenges the Newtonian idea of the universe composed of many particles so that they act like some gigantic machine.

To think from the 'natural idea' confines all things to time and space. But to think from a 'spiritual idea' is to see 'state' in place of 'space' and thus remove all sense of bounding. Blake recognises the distinction for he notes in his annotation:

What a natural Idea is..

The implication of this , which Blake appears to appreciate, is that the body is in space (the natural idea) but that the mind leaps beyond the bounds of space (the spiritual idea).

Swedenborg points out that a man may be aware of this, even from the natural idea, provided he allows into that idea something of spiritual light. To which Blake comments:

Mark this.

Blake's sense of confirmation of this Swedenborgian thought, is seen in the annotation:

Poetic idea.

Blake makes the 'spiritual idea' which Swedenborg states derives nothing from space, into his concept of the 'Poetic idea'. Here Blake is beginning to express his own terminology, as he seeks to establish his own system.

Paragraph 8 (Pages 8 - 9)

This paragraph continues the thought found in paragraph 7. From a merely natural idea or a worldly stance, man cannot appreciate

that the Divine is everywhere yet not in space. If man allows spiritual light to enter his thought, then he can elevate his mind to the spiritual plane, and understand the matter clearly.

Blake comments:

> Observe the distinction here between Natural & Spiritual as seen by Man. Man may comprehend, but not the natural or external man.

Blake demonstrates in his annotation that he recognises the distinction to be found between things natural and things spiritual. Man has the capacity to know deep thought, but not so long as he remains on the merely natural or external level of his being.

For Blake the ability to recognise and understand is expressed in his thought of a 'poetic idea'.

Paragraph 10 (Page 10)

There is an appearance of time and space in the spiritual realm, as it is found on earth. People speak of being distant from others in thoughts, ideas and attitudes; and the distance is related to these concepts in the mind not physical, measurable distance. Also, when people are in sympathy with others in thought and feeling, it is said they are 'near to us'. This is so when the people are miles apart. At the spiritual level of being time and space have no relevance.

The passage states that in the spiritual world the reception of love and wisdom bring affinity with the Lord. He is seen as the Sun overhead. But the closeness of the affinity depends upon the reception of him, thus the acknowledgement of love and wisdom. As Swedenborg states, this is why it is possible for the Lord to be everywhere, in the minds of those wishing to receive him.

Blake comments:

> He who Loves feels love descend into him & if he has wisdom may percieve it from the Poetic Genius, which is the Lord.

To Blake 'Poetic Genius' is life itself; it is God's gift to man. In confirmation of Swedenborg's statement he sees his own affinity with God, for the energy of his life comes from the Poetic Genius which is God's life in him.

Locke and his followers thought the mind was the mere reception of sense impressions; Blake saw the mind as an active agent in creating a universe that was not confined by space and time. Blake made it his task:

> To open the Eternal Worlds, to open the immortal Eyes Of Man inwards into the Worlds of Thought, into Eternity Ever expanding in the Bosom of God, the Human Imagination.[1]

Paragraph 11 (Pages 11 - 12)

'God is very man. In all the heavens there is no other idea of God, than the idea of man'; so states Swedenborg in the proposition which opens this paragraph. He declares that the idea was accepted by the ancients. Further, 'heaven as a whole and in every part is in form as a man'. By form is understood not shape but function. Every angel functions as a human person; he performs uses; so does every society of angels. Human uses are the form of heaven. Our humanness arises from our reception and response to love and wisdom, which give rise to rationality and freedom which constitute our humanness.

Blake's annotation affirms this, using as his argument the fact that God created man, so God himself must be a man. He accepts that man is not the creator of God: he writes in the margin:

> Man can have no idea of any thing greater than Man, as a cup cannot contain more than its capaciousness. But God is a man, not because he is so perciev'd by man, but

because he is the creator of man.

Blake said to Crabb Robinson that he was God because 'God is in all of us'.[2] A transcendent God in human form was much more real to Blake than the Deist thinking of his day. He cannot accept the God of the philosophers, however spiritual they might think themselves to be, if he is only approachable by the effort of reason. "God is not a Mathematical Diagram' he declares in his reading of Berkeley, which is read later than Divine Love and Wisdom, and reflects the importance of the matter for Blake. 'God is man & exists in us & we in him".[3] God can be face to face with man as he enters the 'door of perception' which for Blake expresses man's senses, or the 'eye of imagination'.

The next annotation Blake makes within this same paragraph is in relation to the attitude of the Africans on the idea of God as a man.

Swedenborg relates that the Africans were told that in some folklore there is the idea of God as a cloud: the Africans found this incredible. Blake expresses his sympathy with them when in his annotation he writes:

> Think of a white cloud as being holy, you cannot love it: but think of a holy man within the cloud, love springs up in your thoughts, for to think of holiness distinct from man is impossible to the affections. Thought alone can make monsters, but the affections cannot.

Man can rationalize and create monsters in his thought, which shows the dangers which lie in the exercise of reason alone. Love and affection can only ever accept what is human.

In the text it states that this passage, relating to the Africans and 'the white cloud", is extracted from "a certain small treatise", which is not cited by name, but is in fact from 'A continuation of the Last Judgment and the Spiritual World', paragraph

74, under the section headed 'Africans and Gentiles in the Spiritual World'.

The Last Judgment was published by Swedenborg in 1758 along with four other small works in London, unlike the others, whose material is gathered from the inter-chapter material in Arcana Caelestia with some additons, this work consists of material that is entirely new. In 1763 the 'Continuation concerning the Last Judgment and the Spiritual World' was published in Amsterdam. This material was extracted from an unpublished manuscript. Swedenborg was to reproduce the material from the 'Continuation' in his supplement to the True Christian Religion. Today, the Last Judgment and the Continuation are published as one volume.[4]

Paragraph 12 (Page 13)

The idea of God as a man may be acceptable to most people, but those who are more wise than 'the common People pronounce God to be invisible'. Blake adds his annotation to this comment:

> Worldly wisdom, or demonstration by the senses is the cause of this.

To hold one's thinking on the model of spirit, without a reality to it, is to lead to the position that only the 'invisible' can resolve the issue. Swedenborg is here thinking of the Athanasian doctrine of the Trinity, which uses the term 'person' but confounds the thought by making 'three persons into one person'. The passage ends with a reference to the Divine Human. 'Those who approach the Lord alone think of a Divine Human, and thus of God as a man'. This Swedenborgian concept of the Divine Human is one which Blake readily incorporates into his own work, recognising the point Swedenborg is making, and thus denying the accepted traditional concept of the Trinity.

Paragraph 13 (page 14)

This paragraph stresses the importance of the right idea of God. All things of life spring from man's inmost thoughts, wherein dwells the idea of God. Swedenborg states that this is so for all who hold to religion, for 'all things of religion and all things of worship have respect to God'. In the spiritual world, declares Swedenborg, there is an allotted place according to the idea of God held by the person. The negation of God makes for hell, since nothing else but the recognition and reciprocation of good and truth from the Lord makes heaven in man. The denial of these things, as the basic of life and not merely intellectual doubt, lead to the denial of God. Swedenborg then concludes the paragraph with the statement that in the Christian world, this is 'the negation of the Divinity of the Lord'.

Beside this latter statement, and in the left hand margin, Blake writes:

The negation of the **Poetic Genius.**

Blake is here expressing, a thought found throughout his later writings, that the Divinity of the Lord is Poetic Genius. In the concept of the Divine Human Blake held his own conception of God. Any negation of that thought would be a negation not only of God, but of the very life that is in man.

In his All Religions are One, written about the same time as his reading of Divine Love and Wisdom, Blake makes reference to Poetic Genius several times:

> Principle 1st: That the Poetic Genius is the true Man, and that the body or outward form of Man is derived from the Poetic Genius....
>
> Principle 3rd: No man can think, write, or speak from his heart, but he must intend truth. Thus all sects of

> Philosophy are from the Poetic Genius adapted to the weaknesses of every individual.
>
> Principal 5th: The Religions of all Nations are derived from each Nation's different reception of the Poetic Genius.

Thus his comment in the margin of this paragraph confirms Blake's feelings on the matter.

Paragraph 14 (page 15)

Swedenborg uses the conception of the Divine Love and the Divine Wisdom as being 'distinctly one'. There is a unity because love cannot truly exist unless it be expressed through wisdom; likewise, wisdom must be motivated by love if it is to have life and meaning. This may be illustrated by the idea of heat and light. We can feel heat but we cannot see it except in the form of light. Light is from heat and it cannot be without it. Yet, heat and light are not identical; but they are distinctly one. We may seek to distinguish in thought, but we cannot do so in act.

The thought of 'distinctly one' captures Blake's imagination, for he writes in the right hand margin:

> Thought without affection makes a distinction between Love & Wisdom, as it does between body & Spirit.

Blake recognises that thought may be exercised in distinguishing things from each other, and that by application Love and Wisdom, Body and Spirit are distinct from each other. But he recognises the binding power of love, in his comment 'without affection', for he sees that the reality is in the unity they present in action.

Paragraph 27 (page 24)

In the right hand margin to paragraph 27 Blake gives us an extended comment, called 'Answer'. Swedenborg argues that the plurality of infinite beings is not only impossible in itself, but an impossible conception to the rational mind. And even if it is declared, as in the Athanasian Creed, that the essence is the same in each person of the Godhead, the contradiction is not resolved. There can only be one God: thus only one essence. The thought is then picked up of identity: "one identity is not possible among several'. For it to be otherwise, makes all gods and none God at all.

In his 'Answer' Blake picks up the point of identity. He will not recognise that Essence and Identity must be one and the same. He declares "Essence is not Identity, but from Essence proceeds Identity', and it follows that from this essence there may be many identities. He seeks to strengthen his argument by citing the case of 'affection'. From one affection many thoughts may flow. Blake is making a challenge, and wonders if there is a mistake here in the text or in Swedenborg's thinking, by the comment 'Surely this is an oversight'. Blake is arguing in a rational way, like Swedenborg, to prove the opposite to what Swedenborg is presenting; though he is cautious, not wanting to state that his "spiritual teacher' is wrong!

Blake is ready to concede that there is only one 'Omnipotent, Uncreate & God'; but for him it does not follow that there can be only one Infinite. If this were so, Blake believes, all things would come to an end. He was later to say to Crabb Robinson that the 'Divine was in all of us'. The mention of heaven as a 'Clock', if the Swedenborgian argument were accepted, is a little puzzling. Is Blake suggesting that there is one clock face but many wheels and movements in its

construction? Is he seeing heaven as the clock face, and seeing in that heaven many societies? In paragraph 26 we read 'The universal heaven, consisting of myriads of myriads of angels, in its universal form is a man'. The thought of the one and the many. Certainly for Blake Essence and Identity are not one and the same, as Swedenborg seeks to argue. As Blake expresses it in his 'Answer':

> If the Essence was the same as the Identity, there could be but one Identity, which is false. Heaven would upon this plan be but a Clock; but one & the same Essence is therefore Essence & not Identity.

Maybe he means it would consist of many parts but each gaining a meaning only by its relation to the whole, and hence being meaningless, i.e. identity-less except as a bit of the overall identity.

Paragraph 40 (page 33)

In the middle of the page, in the right hand margin, Blake's comment relates to the underlined words: 'without keeping the Understanding some Time in spiritual Light'. Blake writes:

> This Man can do while in the body.

Swedenborg states in this paragraph that the mind of man is not possessed of any innate ideas. Ideas in the mind arise from sense impressions. Thus the young child is bereft of ideas, and is potentially rather than actually a thinking person. Ideas come from outside the mind, and present themselves as appearances. They are the effect of causes which do not visibly appear to them. Essential causes are spiritual, and are known to man through revelation. And as they are known and understood they form the natural degree of the mind.

If Blake cannot accept Swedenborg here, he recognises that man can attain the spiritual light in the understanding 'while in the body'.

Paragraph 41 (page 33)

On the same page as the previous paragraph we find this present paragraph, to which Blake makes reference. The senses are organs through which sense impressions are received. At length Swedenborg shows this to be the case, that the subject impinges on the senses and affects them, this affection of the substance and form causes the impression to be received. The senses do not go out to be affected i.e. the ear does not go out of itself in order to find the sound, rather does the vibration of the sound waves affect the ear, so that the sound is received.

What Swedenborg is at pains to show is that the appearance of things, which man readily accepts, is not the reality itself. Demonstration may justify the truth, and Blake himself fully accepts this. His marginal comment reads:

Demonstration is only by bodily Senses.

Although Blake's comments appear on the same page, they do relate to different paragraphs, and cannot be seen as a whole. In the one man may investigate through the body, that all appearances are first received into the human mind, and form the understanding. All the senses cannot express the understanding of the human mind, but in themselves are substances and forms which receive impressions, and on which the understanding can make a judgment.

Paragraph 49 (page 40)

Blake declares that what he read in this paragraph was false, or that he and Swedenborg are understanding words in a different way. The crux of this section (paragraphs 47 - 50) is that true love is self giving. The essence of love is to give itself to others, and to make

them happy from itself. 'Love consists in this, that one's own should be another's' (paragraph 47). Love desires conjunction. To love oneself, even in another, brings about separation not conjunction. Reciprocity is God's gift to man, to enable him to give love to another and to receive it himself from another.

God truly loves mankind: he does so whether mankind responds to the love or not. This is the love of the Infinite. Thus there can be nothing of the Infinite in another, for if that were the case God would be loving himself, which is self loving and the opposite of true love.

Blake's comments are found in the left hand margin of the paragraph and read as follows:

> False. Take it so or the contrary it comes to the same for if a thing loves it is infinite. Perhaps we only differ in the meaning of the words Infinite & Eternal.

Blake was later to speak of the spark of God being in everyone, in his remarks to Crabb Robinson. And something of this seed of thought may be present here in the comments to this paragraph. Although Blake may add that it is a question of interpreting the words, he nonetheless believes that man can act like God. But God cannot create others like himself. The Book of Genesis states that God created man in his own image and likeness, but the fall came through man desiring to be as God in himself, not as a reflected likeness.

Paragraph 68 (page 56)

In this paragraph Swedenborg states that God alone is active; all of creation in its activities, including man, is only re-active. By his reaction man appears as though he were active, and this is a necessary Divine Provision, so that man may be in freedom. The essence

of freedom is to be able to act 'as of onself'. So a man may react in accordance with order or against it. When he reacts according to order he acts with the Lord; when he reacts against order, then he reacts against the Lord, and acts only with himself.

Blake places brackets around a section of this paragraph and writes his comments in the left hand margin:

> Good & Evil are here both Good & the two contraries Married.

What Blake recognises through this paragraph is that there is an ambivalence in man - the Good and the Evil. Since they are the man himself, Blake sees them as Good. The two contraries are married.

Contraries to Blake are not opposites but rather complementary to each other. They must not be seen as negations either, for negations affirm one quality and at the same time deny the other. Good and evil, beautiful and ugly are negations. Contraries are energy and reason, elegance and the grotesque. 'Negations are not Contraries: Contraries mutually Exist'.[5] The whole of man is the flowing back and forth, and the interaction of energy and reason, the contraries. As Blake was to state in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, there can be no progression without contraries.[6] In this paragraph Blake sees that 'Good and evil are married' in man, so that in his progression or regeneration the marriage is good, for in the interaction both play a part in his development.

Paragraph 69 (page 57)

Blake's observations are found in the right hand margin, and he has underlined the words 'its Fallacies' in the text. The heading to the paragraph is that 'The Divine fills all spaces of the universe apart from space'. Space and time are proper to nature; they are of the

natural world. This enables man to measure them, for these are proper to man while in the world. Yet, a man's mind is not so, for his consciousness of time and space can be from his own state of being. A man speaks of 'time going by quickly'; but time goes at a regular pace. The appearance of its passing quickly is due to his interest at that moment. The same may be said of space, for according to the state of a man's mind, distance may be far or near with no true reference to the measurable distance. In this state a man is thinking from the light in his understanding, that is his spirit, and the darkness of natural light is removed. Swedenborg states that this action is like removing the 'fallacies' acquired from natural light from the centre to the circumference. Blake seeks this action as the removal of that which bounds the man's thought, that in the removal it cast a bound 'about the infinite', and man is not confined to the concepts of space and time in this world. He recognises that as it is so with the Divine, it can be so with man. While inhabiting a world of time and space, man can be apart from it in spirit, that is, in the action of the mind.

Blake notes:

> When the fallacies of darkness are in the circumference they cast a bound about the infinite.

Paragraph 70 (page 58)

Blake's comments on this paragraph are simple and to the point; he writes 'Excellent' in the right hand margin at the close of the paragraph. What is under discussion is the idea that angels derive nothing of their thought from time and space. Their speech is not dependent upon it either. Blake recognises that for the spiritually

minded space and time are not bounds to restrain the thinking: it is a breaking through the bounds, accepted by natural man, to the greater realisation of truth itself. The true state of life is spiritual both in concept and reality. Blake saw this to be so in his frequent use of 'imagination' as the spiritual element of his being. Swedenborg states that man will come into this realisation after death; in Blake's 'Excellent', he indeed has reached that conclusion for himself.

PART TWO

Blake's comments on the Second Part of Divine Love and Wisdom are confined to four out of a total of eighty-nine paragraphs. The subject under review is that of the two Suns; the sun of the created natural world, and the sun of the spiritual world. The sub-section, on which Blake's comments are to be found, is entitled 'Without the two suns, the one living and the other dead, there can be no creation' (paragraph 163). Blake may have seen these paragraphs, which come close to the end of the Second Part, as a kind of summary. Certainly the crux of the section is the distinction between the two worlds of natural and spiritual, and the means whereby they were created and are sustained. The sun of the spiritual world is the 'first finite' of the Divine Love and the Wisdom of the Lord; thus, the first finite manifestation of Divine Life and from it all created things are produced. Its heat and light are spiritual. By correspondence the spiritual causes bring into being the effects of the natural world, which is seen by man as the sun from whose heat and light the created universe is produced. The one is not continuous with the other, but contiguous. Here, Swedenborg speaks of the degrees of creation and life. Spirit is neither refined nor sublimated matter; matter is not a grosser form of spirit. Their connection and association is only by correspondence. The Divine proceeds from the Lord in the form of a sun, which is spiritual heat and light; this brings about the creation of the spiritual world. In a corresponding way, the sun of this world brings about its creation, but it has no life in itself. The power of the natural sun is derived from the life of the spiritual sun; the natural sun is acted upon by influx, but there is no merging of the one with the other. A discrete degree

exists, which by correspondence gives the appearance of being a continuous degree. All of creation proceeds in this way, from the cause to the effect. From the comments that Blake makes, it is not easy to tell whether he understood fully the implication of this section. What troubles him is how something that is dead can be the means of creation.

Paragraph 163 (Page 131)

Blake's comments are found in the right hand margin, and read:

> False philosophy according to the letter, but true according to the spirit.

The heading of the paragraph, and thus the sub-section is "Without two suns, the one living and the other dead, there can be no creation". Blake recognises that this makes sense if viewed from the spiritual standard, but in appearance it might not appear to be so from men in this world. The natural creation appears to be of its own right and creation, with the sun supplying the heat and light. The paragraph also speaks of angels and spirits inhabiting the spiritual creation, and men the natural creation, and though it might appear that there is a similarity between the two, in its complexity the spiritual creation differs greatly from that of the natural. The comment by Blake expresses his approval that this is so, though men in the world might not really agree with the statement.

Paragraph 164 (page 133)

This paragraph continues the thought found in the previous one, stating that because there are two worlds - the spiritual and the natural, - and they are so distinct from one another, it follows that there should be two suns. The spiritual sun is the origin and is living, the natural sun being but a pale reflection is dead.

Blake's comments are to be found at the close of the paragraph in the right hand margin, and they offer a challenge -

'How could Life create death ?

While appreciating the point made of the respective creations, spiritual and natural, he observes that there is a difficulty in seeing how something living creates something that is dead. The contrast of life and death would not relate to man himself, and the order of his life, but to the fact that the natural world appears to be a living creation, when it is dead. From life flows life, but true life is spiritual, so that which is a discrete degree removed from it, is dead in itself, being dependent for its life, from the origin of all life, the Lord himself whose life proceeds from the spiritual sun to all of creation.

Paragraph 165 (page 133)

The crux of this paragraph is that the dead sun enables a state of fixity, which is constant, to be formed. Man lives in this world as his ultimate and the reaction to things around him causes changes in himself. Without this fixity the world would be a chaos. In the spiritual world there is a response in the surroundings to the things within the mind. Blake can readily accept this to be so because the spiritual world is true reality for him. His comment reads:

They exist literally about the sun & not about the earth.

These words Blake writes in the right hand margin beside the text: 'The terraqueous Globe, in which, upon which, and about which, such things exist as it were the Basis and Firmament'. Materialistic understanding would be that the planetary bodies move round the sun and are not grounded upon the earth as a 'basis or firmament'. Blake confirms his acceptance of the reality of the spiritual world recognising power to be

found in the sun as the major factor in all things of creation, in the spiritual world creating spiritual things, and in the natural world, natural things. The earth though a firmament, that plane of reaction, is the containant of life, not the creator of life.

Paragraph 166 (page 133)

The Lord creates all things from the living sun, and nothing from the dead or natural sun. Blake approves of this statement for he underlines the words 'and nothing by the dead sun'. His comments relate to the words he has underlined and read as follows:

The dead Sun is only a phantasy of evil Man.

Blake recognises that the natural sun is dead, and it is men on earth who contradict the truth. The use of the term 'evil Man', shows that Blake is well aware that evil men view from their senses, and so confirm all things; the good man acknowledges that all things are spiritual in origin and that the Lord is the only creator. Here the truly religous element of Blake's thinking is revealed, and he affirms the statement made by Swedenborg in the second part of Divine Love and Wisdom.

PART THREE

Part Three of Divine Love and Wisdom introduces an important concept in Swedenborgian thought, that of the Doctrine of Degrees or Series. The importance lies in the understanding of creation and life, both natural and spiritual. To consider creation from effects alone, as is the pattern of scientific study, is to see fallacies. It is possible to speak of acorn and oak, chicken and egg, but these are a long way from the realm of genuine causes. Swedenborg states:

> All things which exist in the spiritual world and in the natural world, in general and in particular, co-exist at the same time out of discrete degrees and out of continuous degrees, or out of degrees of altitude and out of degrees of latitude. Without a knowledge of these degrees nothing can be known...concerning the distinction between spiritual and natural, and therefore nothing concerning correspondence...they who are ignorant of these degrees cannot from any judgment see causes; they see only effects, and judge causes from them. [7]

There are two kinds of degree - discrete and continuous. Discrete degrees are distinct orders of life and capacity; they are separate from each other, in such a way that the one can never become the other. Their relationship is found in correspondence. They are sometimes referred to as degrees of altitude, with the image of the rising staircase to mark the relationship of each step as well as its separateness. Continuous degrees are varieties in the same order of life, natural and spiritual. They are sometimes referred to as degrees of latitude. Again, correspondences enable the relationship of natural and spiritual in this degree. In the image of the staircase, the continuous degree would be the tread of the staircase.

Life proceeds from the Divine by means of discrete degrees, as through atmospheres, water and earths, as is found in the natural world.

The spiritual sun is the first proceeding of the Divine which brings all of creation into being, and its corresponding natural sun brings all things into being here on earth. In the natural world the relationship of discrete and continuous degrees in creation and function are to be found. Swedenborg shows in this section the ramification of these degrees in the structure and forms of creation and of mind itself.

Paragraph 181 (page 146)

Blake's comments to this paragraph are found in the right hand margin. The citing of paragraph number 247 shows that he did ponder in the course of his reading of the work, noting especially those points which did not ring true for him. In this case, comparison with a passage some seventy odd pages on in his reading. Blake writes:

> He speaks of Men as meer earthly Men not as receptacles of spirit, or else he contradicts N 257

In the passage Swedenborg states that there are degrees of love and wisdom, consequently of heat and light: this the angels possess, but men on earth have it only in the interiors of their mind. The angel feels the heat and sees the light: men on earth do not. Nevertheless men on earth can experience a certain delight of love which is the nearest they get to a sensation of spiritual heat. They also may have a perception of truth, the nearest they get to seeing spiritual light.

Paragraph number 257, to which Blake makes reference in his comment speaks of the possibility of man's mind being raised up into the light of heaven. Although the natural mind can be elevated into the light of heaven, man perceives naturally what the angels in that same light perceive spiritually. Thus a man may have some understanding of spiritual matters in his natural mind, because of the illumination from the higher degrees within, but while he is in the world he cannot be

elevated into very wisdom, such as is with the angels.

Blake recognises that the 'meer earthly Men' would have no ability to know spiritual matters, but he feels that the fact they are receptacles of spirit should give them a certain ability to know. Swedenborg is not contradicting Blake's thought here, rather does Blake require that man would have the greater ability to know spiritual matters, and he has not settled in his own mind the difference between the 'meer earthly Men' and those who are striving to accept the reality of spiritual matters.

Within paragraph 181 Blake makes a further comment:

> This is certainly not to be understood according to the letter for it is false by all experience. Who does not or may not know of love & wisdom in himself.

Here Blake is offering a challenge to what he reads. Since by experience he himself is aware of spiritual matters, he cannot accept that the full awareness can only be from the spiritual world. A man is born into the faculty of understanding truth, even to the inmost degree, but the reality and usefulness of that knowledge only remains when there is a love for it. With the angel the will and understanding are united: with man they are separated, and more than that, man requires a new will to be born in the truths within the understanding in order to be fully aware of matters spiritual that they remain ever with him.

Paragraph 220 (page 181)

There is a certain feeling of excitement in Blake's comments to this paragraph, for it expresses activity rather than ritual in life and in one's religion. The passage speaks of the power and use of the hands, as an expression of will or determination and as understanding and ability to use knowledge. Reference is also made to the symbolic laying

on of hands at ordination. Blake draws a circle round the whole paragraph, as though to show its importance, instead of the usual bracket or underlining of words. The paragraph concludes: 'the Whole of Charity and Faith is in Works', and across the bottom of the page Blake writes:

> The Whole of the New Church is in the Active Life & not in Ceremonies at all.

Blake's disillusion with the organised New Church is found in the attitude of the separatists in making their organisation a copy of others with rituals, ceremonies and priestly vestments. Blake will have none of this. But to the master craftsman, who created works of beauty with his hands, activity was all important. And in the passage Blake sees spiritual confirmation of the power of the hands as symbols of use and service.

Paragraph 237 (pages 195 - 6)

The passage is split between the bottom of page 195 and the top of page 196, though Blake's comments are found in the right hand margin at the bottom of page 195.

The passage is discussing man's development in relation to the three degrees of altitude. Man is born into the natural degree, and according to his acquisition of knowledge he progresses in understanding and rationality to the second degree. The spiritual degree is opened up through the love of uses arising from things in the understanding. The further development involves acquiring spiritual truths, the cognitions of truth and good; this is the celestial degree.

What should be noted is that the word 'knowledge' appears in present day translation for the Latin word scientia; in the Blake copy the word 'science' appears in place of 'knowledge'. And Blake's comment revolves round the word science. He does grasp that men are born into

three degrees, in potentiality, and can progress from one degree to the other in actuality. The thought of opening and closing the degrees in man is for Blake a tautology. The Swedenborg passage states that man moves in a progressive state upwards, or more interior, and not as Blake appears to see it, that the upper degrees could come down and influence. Blake hints that if Man is only in the third degree, with the other two closed, then man descends into 'meer Nature of Hell'. What Blake is stating to be the third degree, Swedenborg states as the first degree into which we are actually born, with the potential of achieving the other two degrees. Confusion of thought is present in Blake's mind because he cannot accept 'science' has any power in itself, and the 'intellectuals' who possess all science cannot teach anyone about the true nature of life. In the Swedenborgian vocabulary, science is an expression for knowledge (scientia) and intellect an expression for understanding (intellectus). In the early translations of Swedenborg's works there was a tendency to use Latinized English words. Intellect to Blake means the spiritual degree as discrete from the natural degree. Affection is the love or uses of the celestial degree.

Blake writes:

> Study Sciences till you are blind Study intellectuals till you are cold Yet Science cannot teach intellect Much less can intellect teach Affection
> How foolish then is it to assert that Man is born in only one degree when that one degree is reception of the 3 degrees two of which he must destroy or close up or they will descend if he closes up the two superior then he is not truly in the 3^{d} but descends out of it into meer Nature or Hell

Blake is still grappling with the concept of discrete and continuous degrees. He adds to the passage 'See N 239', then he comments:

> Is it not also evident that one degree will not open the other & that science will not open intellect but that they are discrete & not continuous so as to explain each other except by correspondence which has nothing to do

> with demonstration for you cannot demonstrate one degree by the other for how can science be brought to demonstrate intellect, without making them continuous & not discrete.

Swedenborg states that the relationship between the degrees is by correspondences alone. Blake appears to want to change Swedenborg's use of the degree, to make one the other.

It was accepted at the time that man's increase in love and wisdom was judged to be merely continuous, and it was Swedenborg who presented the thought of discrete and continuous degrees. What must be recognised is that within a discrete degree there are degrees that are continuous. For instance, a man in the natural degree may have more knowledge and affection, or the two may decrease, but the increase or the decrease is in <u>natural</u> affection and knowledge, and no increase in these makes a man a spiritual man. The degrees are there in potency, man makes them actual by use, by a continuous development of one level for the higher level to be developed also. So long as a man lives in the natural world he thinks, wills, and speaks from the natural degree of his mind. And though a man open the spiritual degree he has no conscious knowledge of its opening, because there is a discrete degree between one and the other. After death man comes into consciousness of whichever interior degree has been open while he was in the world.

It should be noted that the longest comment by Blake in the whole work is related to this paragraph: yet much arises from his abhorrence of the word 'science'.

<u>Paragraph 238</u> (page 196)

Blake makes the simple comment 'See N 239'

Paragraph 239 (page 198)

Blake writes 'Mark this it explains N 238'. He also writes alongside words he underlines:

Not to a Man but to the Natural Man

The words underlined are 'and then he speaks Things ineffable and incomprehensible to the natural Man'.

Paragraph 241 (page 200)

Without any comments Blake underlines the following words in this paragraph: 'whilst it is in the Light'. Swedenborg is applying in this paragraph the concept, in relation to the structure of man's mind, that there is end, cause and effect. In all degrees of altitude in man, love is the end (or purpose) and wisdom is the cause (or means), of use, which is the effect (or 'last end'). Swedenborg writes:

> A man also is able to see from his reason that wisdom is cause, for he, that is, his love which is the end, diligently searches for means in the understanding through which fully to attain his end; thus he consults his wisdom, and these means make the cause through which he works. That use is the effect.

Blake recognises that the light of reason, that is spiritual light, makes this clear.

Paragraph 244 (page 204)

Blake places a bracket to embrace the words 'And hence it also follows, that the Understanding does not lead the Will, or that Wisdom does not produce Love, but that it only teaches, and shows the Way, it teaches how a Man ought to live, and shows the Way in which he ought to walk'. Alongside, in the left hand margin he writes 'Mark this'.

Paragraph 256 (page 219)

After underlining the words 'long as he lives in the World, and is thereby in the natural Degree', Blake adds the comment in the right hand margin: 'See Sect 4 of the next Number'.

In these comments Blake is comparing what is written in a very close way, seeking to understand the meaning and how what he reads may be used in his own thinking.

Paragraph 257 (page 220)

This paragraph relates to the elevation of the natural mind, which development is by continuous degrees, to the higher discrete degrees, by correspondence and it contains a number of effects. Blake places a bracket round section four of these effects, with the comment in the left hand margin:

> This is while in the Body. This is to be understood as unusual in our time but common in ancient

Further in the paragraph he underlines the words 'spiritual Substances' and 'natural Substances' as they appear in section five of the effects. He then adds in relation to these underlined words the following:

> Many perversely understand him as if man while in the body was only conversant with natural Substances because themselves are mercenary & unworldly & have no idea of any but worldly gain

Is the 'him' in Blake's comment Swedenborg or simply man? If it is man, then Blake is offering a challenge, that man can elevate his mind to higher things, instead of being merely worldly. If it relates to Swedenborg, then Blake is saying that many have misunderstood him because of their unwillingness to think of spiritual things, contenting themselves in nothing but worldly gain.

In the natural mind there are contained natural and spiritual substances, and it is from the spiritual substance that thoughts arise. After death the natural substance recedes and the spiritual substance remains, being the basis of man's mind in the spirit.

Paragraph 267 (page 233)

The paragraph speaks of the ability to raise the understanding to 'superior' light, if man so desires it, but so long as man remains in evils this is not possible. Blake writes in the left hand margin,

> Who shall dare to say after this that all elevation is of self & is Enthusiasm & Madness & is not plain that self derived intelligence is worldly demonstration

This comment could again apply to Swedenborg and the attitude taken towards his work, for Wesley spoke of his madness. But then again, there were those who thought Blake was mad. For Blake the desire to know spiritual things was not madness, nor was it selfishness or self derived intelligence, but man's willingness and desire to seek higher values.

PART FOUR

This section deals with the process and order of creation. It begins with matters relating to the Lord, that is Jehovah, as creator of the universe. Blake makes his comments on the matter of the spiritual sun. Earlier he was puzzled how something 'living' could create something that was 'dead' (the spiritual sun and the natural sun). In the first comment Blake makes in this section, it appears as though he has found an answer to his puzzle.

Paragraph 294 (page 268)

'Forasmuch as the Things, which constitute the Sun of the spiritual world, are from the Lord.' Blake sees here that even the spiritual sun is not life in itself - its life is from the Lord. This appears to solve the problem of the 'dead' sun of the earth, for Blake comments:

> This assertion that the spiritual Sun is not Life explains how the natural Sun is dead

He then goes on to comment, on a further section in this paragraph, that angels alone have spiritual ideas, and not men. Blake feels that man can have spiritual thoughts, especially after reading paragraph 257. Blake writes:

> How absurd then would it be to say that no man on earth has a spiritual idea after reading N 257

Blake double underlines 'natural ideas" in the paragraph. Blake has failed to appreciate that spiritual truth can be revealed by God, and man can have some appreciation of what is revealed. But man cannot discover the spiritual truth from natural ideas alone.

Paragraph 295 (page 269)

This passage speaks of an experience by Swedenborg of angels thinking spiritually on a matter and then seeking to relate to him the subject in natural ideas. It was impossible, because natural and spiritual differ in degrees of altitude and there cannot be communication between one and the other by correspondences. Blake's comment is:

> they could not tell him in natural ideas how absurd must men be to understand him as if he said the angels could not express themselves at all to him.

This comment again reflects opinions of others on the validity of Swedenborg's works. Here Blake is certainly on the side of his 'spiritual teacher'.

Paragraph 304 (page 276)

Blake's comments to this paragraph are found in the middle on the left hand margin relating to the underlined words 'where they are in the Light'; and later to the underlined words in the same sentence, 'in Heat'. He writes:

> We see here that the cause of an ultimate is the absence from heat and light.

In the passage it is stated that ultimates are in obscurity, that is without heat and light, whereas in first principles there is both light and heat.

Paragraph 315 (page 285)

In this sub-section, which begins at paragraph 307, the idea of 'uses', as the ends of creation is introduced. In all forms of uses there is a certain image of creation. The image of creation is partly

imaged in the use of created things, and completely imaged in man. This is seen through the descending degrees from the creator through the spiritual world, its sun and atmospheres, to the ultimates which is the earth. Then there is the re-ascending from the ultimate to intermediates to man, and through man to the Lord. This circle of uses is for the formation of an angelic heaven from the human race.

Blake's comment, in the right hand margin, relates to the conclusion of the paragraph which states that the natural forces contribute nothing to the image of creation. He writes:

Therefore the Natural Earth & Atmosphere is a Phantasy

Further in the paragraph he brackets the words 'Heat, Light and Atmospheres of the natural World only open Seeds;...but this is not by Powers derived from their own sun'. Blake writes in the right hand margin, 'Mark this'.

Further he underlines, a little later in the paragraph the words 'for the Image of Creation is spiritual', contrasting it with 'in the natural world'. Power from the spiritual sun can create, but in the natural world things are clothed in matter.

Paragraph 316 (page 286)

In the right hand margin Blake writes 'A going forth & returning'. The passage relates to what was stated earlier about uses, that they progress from Principles to Ultimates and then from Ultimates to Principles.

Paragraph 324 (page 295)

Opposite the words in the text 'Organs and Viscera of his Body, not with them as Substances, but with them as Uses', Blake writes the comment:

Uses & substances are so different as not to correspond

Blake is recognising that the use or function is all important, but he finds it difficult to relate uses and substances as one by correspondence.

Paragraph 336 (page 305)

Blake simply puts a large cross alongside this paragraph without comment. In this section, at paragraph 339 (page 308), he underlines certain words, without comment: these are 'putrid smells', 'poisonous animals', 'things in the natural world', and 'origin from the Lord'.

The subject under review is of interest to Blake because it speaks of evil uses which have their origin in hell. Uses are found in all things on earth: good uses serve the perfection of man's rational and thus his spirituality; evil uses seek to destroy the rational and so prevent man from becoming spiritual. Uses, like love, are either good or evil, depending on their application. 'Evil uses are all things that are opposite to good uses'. For evil is a perversion of good.

The Doctrine of Uses is presented in paragraphs 307-348, showing good uses to be created by the Lord and evil uses produced from hell. Uses are provided for the sustaining of the body, perfecting the rational, and receiving the spiritual from the Lord. The uses of things in their order and degree are entirely determined by their relation to man, and through man to the Creator. Uses are intrinsically uses of love, for love is life. Uses serve the purposes of love, and since the uses willed by Divine Love have man as their object, and man's highest and noblest uses are from love to the Lord and the neighbour, it may be

seen that all things are created by the Lord for man. Uses are not from man but from the Lord for the sake of man. 'Even evil uses are from the spiritual sun, but..good uses are converted into evil uses in hell' (n348).

PART FIVE

This final part presents the creation of man. Because God is love he creates the other-than-Himself, thus the finite, as the object of His Divine Love. Creation stands over against the uncreate. The entire universe is created in order that mankind could be created into the finite image and likeness of God. Man, being so created, is able to apprehend his creator and to receive His life in its quality of humanness. In freedom according to reason he is able to respond and reciprocate the Divine love and wisdom and thus to be conjoined with God to eternity. In the consummation of this purpose is the very end of creation fulfilled.

In this section will and understanding are described, functionally being distinct but mutually being dependent. They may function in the brain, but they are not spatially contained in it. Love has its derivations, such as affection, desires, appetites, pleasures and delights. So Wisdom has its derivations, such as perception, reflection, recollection, thought and intention. The understanding is the receptacle of wisdom, and will the receptacle of love. Affections in the will alone are general and vague; only when an affection gives rise to thought in the understanding is the affection known as a particular state of feeling in relation to an object. 'The mind of man is in his spirit and the spirit is the man, because the mind means all things of the will and understanding in man'. (Divine Love and Wisdom 387) Between mind and the body as between spirit and matter there is perfect correspondence. By influx there can be action of spirit into and upon matter. Man in a perfect human form is immortal; the soul of

this human form is the will and understanding.

The first comment by Blake in this section is at paragraph 404.

Paragraph 404 (page 410)

Blake brackets and underlines several sentences, with comment in the right hand margin, 'Note this'. The paragraph states that thought exists first in the natural mind, but this is thought from memory. Thought from the perception of truth is from the affection of truth which is the thought of wisdom.

Paragraph 410 (page 421)

Again Blake marks a bracket and underlines, with a mark shaped like a finger pointing down the page, and the comment, 'Mark this'. Here the statement is made that love or will joins itself to the understanding, not vice versa.

Further down the paragraph, again with a bracket and underlining, Blake comments in the left hand margin, 'Mark this'. Thoughts, perceptions and knowledges are said to flow from the spiritual world, and are received by the love according to the affections in the understanding. Again, Blake places a bracket and underlining, with a 'Mark this' in the margin. Here reference is made to the fact that it is a fallacy that the understanding joins itself to the will. Blake makes a further bracket and a 'Mark this' to the statement that the life of man is love, and this is measured according to his affection for truth.

Paragraph 411 (page 424)

Blake underlines the statement concerning the fact that love

joins itself to the understanding and not vice versa with the note 'Mark this'.

Paragraph 412 (page 425)

With a bracket and the comment in the left hand margin 'Mark', Blake underlines the words relating to the fact that the understanding does nothing from itself but from affection. Further in the paragraph (page 426), Blake places a bracket and a comment 'Mark' under the underlined words which again are stressing the point that love by its affections joins itself to the understanding.

Paragraph 413 (pages 426 - 7)

With a further underlining, this time the title to the sub-section, and a bracket and a marginal note 'Mark this', Blake draws attention to the words in the text relating to wisdom or understanding as the means that the power of love can give to the elevation of the understanding into the light of heaven. The true learning process arises from affection of the will, in the possessing of knowledge for its use. Knowledge in itself has no power of its own.

Paragraph 414 (page 429)

The passage states that the will can be elevated into the 'heat' of heaven, and the understanding to the 'light' of heaven, and if the two be conjoined then a heavenly marriage takes place. Swedenborg calls the conjunction marriage. To this Blake writes, in the middle of the right hand margin:

> Is it not false then, that love recieves influx thro the understand^{g} as was asserted in the society

This comment 'in the society' would suggest that Blake had heard other

Swedenborgians discussing the matter, and the likely place would have been the Theosophical Society. Here might be confirmation that he did attend the Society meeting. Erdman suggests that it could have been at the Conference meeting, in April 1790. Certainly the work Divine Love and Wisdom was available in translation at the time, but no reference is made to the work in the resolutions presented to the Conference, since in the main they were related to the establishment of an organisaton, and the basic doctrines of the church were being put forward. It seems more probable that Blake attended an early meeting of the Society when there was a freer exchange of thoughts and matters were less dogmatic. Blake would be more inclined to think that the will more than the understanding was important. Whatever the case, Blake is remembering something that impressed itself upon his mind.

Paragraph 419 (page 435)

At the bottom of the page, in the right hand margin Blake writes:

Therefore it was not created impure & is not naturally so

Here Swedenborg states that the love of man became impure through its separation from celestial love. To understand this paragraph one must be aware of the statement in the Arcana Caelestia which relate to the fall of man and the separation of the will and understanding in the image of the ark and its structure. This also marked the end of the Most Ancient Church and the formation of the Ancient Church. It also expresses the change from the celestial genius in man to that of the spiritual.Hence in the text reference to 'parents' suggests that in this day such heavenly love can be transmitted to one's offspring as was possible in the Golden Age.

So far as man has the corrupt will, or Old Man as Paul expressed it, for that reason there must be separation of the will and understanding. But in the course of regeneration, a new will is born in the truths of the understanding, which can be elevated into the light of heaven. Then the new will takes to itself a new understanding. Here is the heavenly marriage to which Swedenborg relates in the text. Blake appears to be happy with this, and in his comments he writes:

> Therefore it does not recieve influx thro the understanding

Paragraph 421 (page 440)

Blake brackets the title to sub section XVII with the comment in the margin 'Mark this they are elevated together'. Reference is made to the need for the impure love or will to be elevated, otherwise it remains in its impurity. Unless the will together with the understanding is elevated into heaven, it sooner or later drags down the understanding from its elevation to its own level. There is need to note in this paragraph the two distinct affirmations: love is defiled in the understanding, and love is defiled by the understanding. It is defiled in the understanding when it is affected by evils: it is defiled by the understanding when it makes the truths of wisdom to become the servant of evil affections, and yet more so when it perverts the truths of wisdom.

Paragraph 422 (page 441)

Blake brackets and underlines the words: 'The Understanding is not made spiritual and celestial, but the Love is'. The paragraph appears in the concluding number relating to the beginnings or

rudiments of man from his conception.

Paragraph 432 (page 458)

In the left hand margin and the top of the page Blake writes:

Heaven & Hell are born together

Reference is to the statement by Swedenborg that the compages of the little brain was in the order and in form a heaven, but that the outer compages were contrary to order and that form.

In Blake's comment, presented in poetic form, we have the origin of the idea which was later to be developed in his The Marriage of Heaven and Hell.

Observations on Blake's Annotations

From Blake's annotations to Part One approval is given to Swedenborg's distinction between spiritual and natural man (n8). But even so, Blake desires to use his own terminology. 'Poetic idea' takes the place of Swedenborg's 'spiritual idea' (n7). 'Poetic Genius' is used to describe the Lord who is the source of love and spiritual life (n10). The 'Negation of God', Swedenborg states is from hell, and equally the Christian world's view of the Lord Jesus Christ, as 'Negation of the Lord's Divinity': Blake sees this as "the Negation of the Poetic Genius" (n13).

Blake desires to build his own system rather than rely on the system of another, so he feels free to substitute his own terms for Swedenborg's terms. He accepts Swedenborg's writings to be analogies or metaphors for the truth, rather than the rationalistic descriptions of truth. Blake is prepared to suspend his judgement on what Swedenborg has stated, with the comment: 'Perhaps we only differ in the meaning of the words Infinity & Eternal' (n 49).

On the question of regeneration or salvation, Blake is sympathetic to Swedenborg's presentation. Man is a recipient of life, but from his own hereditary evil he can react against God. It is only when man rejects his own selfish will, which is primarily evil, that he can become good and conjoined to God's will. With the attribute of free will man can react against his own will in order to accept the will of God. Blake's enthusiasm stands out clearly in the comment: 'Good & Evil are here both Good & the two contraries Married' (n68). Here is a thought Blake was later to develop in Marriage.

In Part Two Blake believed that the spiritual was the only reality: Swedenborg accepted this also but he believed the natural world also impinged on man. Life in the natural world is possible through its correspondence with the spiritual world. The view point is that between spiritual reality in itself, and that which is seen to correspond to spiritual reality. So for Swedenborg the natural sun was dead, and by correspondence with the spiritual sun, it appeared to have life. Blake was later to look at the sun and see a host of angels. He finds it impossible to accept that something that is dead can create; how could a dead sun sustain life in the natural world? Blake saw 'poetic idea' as the real and the mechanical correspondence as unreal. Blake also supposed the notion that death and evil are only illusions, and therefore are not strictly creations of life.

Part Three shows the relation between the natural and the spiritual in man, as Swedenborg introduces the concept of degrees: simultaneous degrees, such as light to shades of dark, and discrete degrees, which demonstrate distinction and yet unity, e.g., the orange is a unity, but its distinctive parts are pith, fruit and skin. Blake readily accepts the concept for he sees that man receives life and knowledge as influx from the spiritual world. But he takes Swedenborg to task in n181 for the obvious truth as he sees it: 'Who does not or may not know of love & wisdom in himself'. Has Blake misread Swedenborg, for the subject is that of spiritual heat and light?

Blake accepts that there is a limitation on the natural mind. In the state of evil man cannot elevate his understanding to higher things. He is favourable to Swedenborg's presentation of the

progression in man's regeneration:

> Man, at his Birth, first comes into the natural Degree, and this increases in him by Continuity according to the Sciences, and according to the Understanding acquired by them, to the summit of Understanding which is called rational (n237)

But he would argue with the terminology. In the Answer he gives, by 'intellect' he means the 'spiritual' degree discrete from the natural degree, and by 'Affection' the love or will of the celestial degree, which again is discrete. What Blake would challenge is the understanding of these things through the 'Sciences' and 'Rational'. Blake cannot accept the sciences can offer anything, and reason alone holds not all the answers. If Blake had understood these terms as implying knowledge which leads man ever higher, and that the rational is the highest state of understanding the meaning of truth, then the confusion might not have arisen. But Blake recognises, as does Swedenborg, that it is for man to cooperate with the Lord in his spiritual advancement.

Such an advancement requires more than mere observance of certain rituals; it requires the change of heart. So Blake declares what the New Church means to him; it is the activity of life, and not the mere performance of rituals and ceremonies. 'The Whole of the New Church is in the Active Life & not in Ceremonies at all'. This only confirms the repeated statements of Swedenborg regarding the performance of 'uses' and the active life of charity and faith as one unity in man.

Blake is still not reconciled to the relationship between the spiritual and natural world as he finds it, and Swedenborg's explanation in Part Four. After reading n257 he cannot accept that men on earth have no spiritual ideas. He offers an explanation of his own, in n315,

that 'the Natural Earth & Atmosphere is a Phantasy'. This is in contrast to Swedenborg who sees creation as a real and necessary 'effect' to the trine of end, cause and effect.

In his comment, 'A going forth & returning', Blake accepts Swedenborg's proposition that man proceeds "from first Principles to Ultimates' (n304) and "that there is a Progression from first Principles to Ultimates and from Ultimates to first Principles' (n316). And he readily accepts 'the Image of Creation is spiritual', even if it is 'clothed in matter' which becomes the means of 'uses in the natural world" (n315).

But Blake wishes to impress his own thought on what he reads. He distinguishes 'use' from the substance of the natural world. Swedenborg states:

> there doth not exist any Thing in the created Universe, which hath not correspondence with something of Man, not only with his Affection and his Thoughts thence derived, but also with the Organs and Viscera of his Body, not with them as Substances, but with them as Uses" (n324).

To this Blake adds, 'Uses & substances are so different as not to correspond'.

In his annotations to the final part of Divine Love and Wisdom Blake shows his interest in Swedenborg's argument for the priority of the will over the understanding, thus of affection over thought, love over reason. Before the will has entered into an affection for good and truth, there exists a thought from memory. This thought is unlike thought from affection for truth. The thought of wisdom comes after the will's affection for truth. Man may think he has acquired this thought from observation of the world around him, but true thought comes from within. It arises from love and affection. Thus the will in man must

be reformed, if there is to be union with God. When the new will is so formed, then can the new understanding be formed also. The new will is born in the truths of the old understanding. And for man to know truth he must first of all have an affection for that truth. So the will first develops an affection for spiritual truth, so that the truth can enter the understanding.

Given the priority of the will over the understanding, Blake is puzzled by what 'was asserted in the society', that 'love receives influx through the understanding' (n414). According to Blake's note, n414 confirms the idea and n429 denies it. But both passages reflect the reciprocal relationship of will and understanding. Blake is no doubt anxious to know how this relates to man's regeneration: is it the priority of the understanding or the will? The confirmation Blake is seeking from Swedenborg is whether man is saved by action and affection, or reason and knowledge, for in his own mind, will always has the priority.

In his final annotation 'Heaven & Hell are born together', Blake recognises that 'hell' is a necessity for a free and active life. Man's inherent nature creates an opposition to the heavenly form. Marriage is Blake's answer to this problem, developed at the expense of Swedenborg's rational explanation of truth, and his support for reason.

C) Divine Providence

The Wisdom of Angels concerning Divine Providence was published in translation 1790. Dr. N. Tucker was the translator with the Rev. John Clowes writing an anonymous preface for the work. It was issued by the Society for the Printing, Publishing and Circulation of the Writings of Swedenborg, Manchester. Half the print run of 1000 copies was taken by the Theosophical Society in London. Robert Hindmarsh was the printer.

In the top left hand corner of the half title page, in ink, there is Blake's signature - 'William Blake'. This is to show his ownership of the book which was a secondhand copy. Below the name, on the right, is written:

> See note page XVIII - preface
> pa 82-254 (this in place of '85' crossed out) - 281
> 434 - 497 - 566

All these reference numbers are to the annotations made in the body of the work by Blake. They may have been collected by another hand; or they may be Blake's own check list of his annotations. A similar series of reference numbers appear in Divine Love and Wisdom which Blake also annotated.

Divine Providence is a systematic study of the nature of the Lord's governance of the spiritual and natural worlds. It is a continuation of the Divine Love and Wisdom. The arguments are presented in twenty-one topics with elaborations. So we read that the end of creation is a heaven of angels from the human race (paragraph 27f); that man should act in freedom from reason (paragraph 71f); that there are Laws of Permission (paragraph 234f); that man cannot be forced, but must personally compel himself (paragraph 29f); and that the desire of the Lord is to reform man, since there is no predestination (paragraph

William Blake

ANGELIC WISDOM

CONCERNING THE

DIVINE PROVIDENCE.

[PRICE 7s. 6d.]

Half title page : Divine Providence
with Blake's signature

THE

WISDOM

OF

ANGELS

CONCERNING THE

DIVINE PROVIDENCE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE LATIN

BY THE

Hon. EMANUEL SWEDENBORG.

Originally Published at AMSTERDAM, Anno 1764.

LONDON:

Printed and Sold by R. HINDMARSH,

PRINTER TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE OF WALES,

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And may be had by giving Orders to any of the Booksellers in Town or Country.

M.DCC.XC.

322f).

Blake's annotations to Divine Providence are chiefly concerned with predestination. So vehement are his remarks that some critics assume Blake to be correct in his charge.[1] It would be hard to sustain this thought when Swedenborg declares: 'All who are born men, in whatsoever religion they may be principled, are capable of being saved' (paragraph 253); and 'that they are "saved who acknowledge God and lead a good life' (paragraph 325). Indeed, one of the section headings is: 'That every man may be reformed and that there is no such thing as Predestination' (paragraphs 322-330). In view of this, Blake can only take the attitude he does from a deliberate mis-reading of Swedenborg. His hostile approach finds confirmation in this: Swedenborg writes 'death is a continuation of life with this difference, that man cannot be reformed after death' (paragraph 227). So Blake makes the charge of 'spiritual predestination', because man is predestined to heaven; for it to be otherwise is to be 'contrary to the Divine Love and it's Infinity' (paragraph 329). Is it that in this thought Blake feels his freedom is being taken away from him? Swedenborg has not solved the riddle to Blake's satisfaction, of man's freedom and God's foreknowledge.

Blake appears to take his stance from his reading of the Preface to the work. He calls it 'Lies and Priestcraft', and declares that it supports 'predestination', and so far as Blake is concerned, Swedenborg's view is 'more Abominable than Calvin's'.

The preface, though anonymous, is accepted to be the work of the Rev. John Clowes, an Anglican Clergyman. Is Blake aware of this, and is that the reason he stands against 'Lies and Priestcraft'? The saintly Clowes, as De Quincey called him, may not be the target of

Blake's rebuff, but those in the General Conference who were anxious to establish an organisation with liturgy, hymn book and priesthood. At the second General Conference in April 1790 a hymn book was approved, and by 1791 approval was given for ministerial garments. Also in April 1791 the Conference petitioned Parliament for the right to perform all religious ceremonies, saying that they were ready to take the oath of allegiance and supremacy, but without being required to declare themselves as Protestants or Dissenters.[2] Such moves would not receive the approval of Blake. Further, the publication of Divine Providence in London, with Robert Hindmarsh as printer, who was instrumental in the founding of the General Conference of the New Church, may have provoked the attack on the work by Blake. Did Blake think Hindmarsh was the translator and author of the preface? Certainly Stanley Redgrove, who was the first to record in print Blake's annotations to Divine Providence, accepts Hindmarsh to be the anonymous author.[3] Even if Blake takes his stance for any of the above reasons, his annotations in the work are centred on his objections to the thought of predestination, as he conceives of it and sees it clearly writ in Swedenborg's work.

Blake's seemingly unfair accusation against Swedenborg - that he is as much a believer in predestinarianism as Calvin, when in fact he had rejected the doctrine - may lie in Blake's dismissal of the external agent of salvation (or damnation), especially of an external creator who knew from the beginning of his cration there would be those who would go to hell. From Blake's point of view the conservative reaction of the London Swedenborgians, as he saw from his visit to the First General Conference and from their protestations of loyalty, abhorrence of democracy and the French Revolution, and reverence for the Ten Commandments; would follow their uncompromising stance on the

predestination question. Blake is out of sympathy with those in Conference, and he is growing in the realisation that Swedenborg's views are incompatible with his own. Swedenborg may appear to oppose the doctrine of predestination, but in Blake's eyes he does not go far enough. In this all churches were condemned because it was inconceivable to Blake that an omniscient God would create human beings who were destined for hell.

The priestcraft, as Blake reflected in the Songs, held to a religion which had its source in mystery. The 'Thou shalt not' over the door, and the 'Priests in black gowns', appear in "The Garden of Love". The fear of the little child in 'A Little Boy Lost', to present a picture of a religion that is dead, and his treatment at the hands of the Priest, only emphasises the sense of 'mystery', and with it the power over others exercised through intellectual mumbo-jumbo! Blake seeks to avoid mystery. He refuses to accept the mysterious and the supernatural aspects of religion, as is seen in 'The Divine Image'. For Blake religious knowledge is in the form of an awareness possessed of all individuals. Thus Blake does not approach Divine Providence wide-eyed, but in a challenging mood. And his reading of the Preface only goes to sharpen the sword of his attack on priestcraft, and the proclamation of the mystery of predestination and election.

The author of the anonymous preface states that if a general Providence is accepted, then it follows that a particular one must also be accepted. This must enter all things and circumstances. At the time there was no denial of Providence, but questions were asked as to its operation. And the author states this 'borders upon a Denial, and indeed when rightly considered is a Denial'. To this Blake adds: 'Is not this Predestination'. (page V)

The author then challenges the reader, for what is found in the body of the work may at times contradict one's own favourite opinons, and at times appear obscure and perplexing. Alongside the sentence:

> that nothing doth in general so contradict man's natural and favourite opinions as truth and that all the grandest and purest truths of heaven must needs seem obscure and perplexing to the natural man at first view:

Blake writes, 'Lies & Priestcraft Truth is Nature'. (page XVIII)

Blake then underlines a section (page XIX) which reads:

> until his intellectual Eye becomes accustomed to the Light, and can thereby hold it with Satisfaction,

and he then adds,

> that is: till he agrees to the Priests interest.

The next annotation is found in Chapter Three which discusses the proposition that in the Divine Providence of the Lord, all that is done has respect to what is infinite and eternal. In paragraph 69 (page 82) it states:

> the Man who doth not suffer himself to be led to, and enrolled in Heaven, is prepared for his Place in Hell; for Man from himself continually tends to the lowest Hell, but is continually with-held by the Lord, and he, who cannot be with-held, is prepared for a certain Place there, in which he is also enrolled immediately after his Departure out of the Word

And Blake's annotation is:

> What is Enrolling but Predestination

The passage is suggesting that man is in freedom of choice, and that it is the Lord's will that man enters heaven after death. But given the choice, a man may choose hell. Blake sees that the Divine end in view is predestination, since all are 'enrolling' either in heaven or hell. But it is not the Lord who is directing, but man himself selecting.

Blake makes another annotation within this paragraph.

Swedenborg writes:

> and he, who cannot be with-held, is prepared for a certain Place there, in which he is also enrolled immediately after his Departure out of the World; and this Place there is opposite to a certain Place in Heaven, for Hell is in Opposition to Heaven;

to which Blake comments:

> Every (indistinct word possibly 'day') he also ocuying that place in Heaven See N 185 & 329 at the End See 277 & 307 & 203 where he says that a Place for Every Man is Foreseen and at the same time provided

The next annotation is found on page 254, in Chapter Four which is headed 'There are laws of the Divine Providence and these are unknown to man' (paragraphs 70-190). The fifth law, as stated to paragraph 175 reads: 'It is a law of the Divine Providence that man should not perceive and feel anything of the operation of the Divine Providence, but still that he should acknowledge it'. And the annotation is found in the explanation of the proposition 'If a man saw clearly the Divine Providence he would either deny God or make himself God'. Paragraph 185, reads in part:

> after Death ...the..great and rich... at first speak of God, and of the Divine Providence, as if they acknowledged them in their Hearts. But whereas they then manifestly see the Divine Providence, and from it their final Portion, which is that they are to be in Hell, they connect themselves wtih Devils there, and then not only deny God but also blaspheme God.

Blake adds:

> What could Calvin Say more than is Said in this Number Final Portion is Predestination see N 69 & 329 at the End & 277 & 203 Where he says A Place for each Man is Foreseen & at the same time Provided

Swedenborg is expressing the thought that words do not always express the true feelings of a person, but the feeling of the heart do. If a man be let into his own feelings he would want to shy from them. It is the Lord who is continually supporting man and desiring that he should

be led to heaven.

There is a feeling that Blake is not so much reading and studying closely the work of Divine Providence, but is searching out those passages which support his established thought that Swedenborg is a predestinationist. In this passage he aligns him with Calvin. Joseph Priestley, who was a formidable critic of the Swedenborgians, regarded Swedenborg as an ally on the question of predestination. He writes:

> (Calvinism is) a system which represents the whole human race as so fatally injured by the sin of Adam, that they retain no natural power of doing the will of God.. a system which teaches us that, in order to effect the redemption of a few, God was under a necessity of reversing the known maxims of his conduct, in punishing the innocent instead of the guilty; changing his character of gracious and merciful into that of an inexorable tyrant...Whereas it is justly observed by Mr. Swedenborg, in his Doctrine concerning the Lord, n.95, there is nothing of vindictive justice in God.[4]

Since Joseph Johnson sold Priestley's books in London, and Blake did commissions for Johnson, it could be that Blake was aware of Priestley. Certainly Priestley's view of God was that of form in 'infinite space', which was far from Blake's Swedenborgian concept of the 'divine human'. But was Blake always consistent in his thought? He calls upon the Calvinist predestinarian Whitefield to be paired with the Arminian Wesley as the two Christian witnesses, as foretold in Revelation, in his Milton, while decrying Swedenborg:

> O Swedenborg! strongest of men, the Samson shorn by the Churches,
> Shewing the Transgressors in Hell, the proud Warriors in Heaven,
> Heaven as the Punisher & Hell as One under Punishment,
> .....
>
> The Witnesses lie dead in the Street of the Great City:
> No Faith is in all the Earth: the Book of God is trodden under Foot.
> He sent his two Servants, Whitefield & Wesley: were

they Prophets,
Or were they Idiots or Madmen? Shew us Miracles! [5]

Blake's next annotation is association with paragraph 203 (pages 280-81) in which he underlines certain words. This is found in Chapter Five where the heading is: 'There is no such thing as man's own prudence, it only appears that there is, and there ought to be this appearance; but the Divine Providence is universal because it is in things most individual'. And the sub-section in which the annotation appears reads: 'The Lord by means of his Divine Providence arranges the affections (of the whole human race) into one form, which is the human form'. The paragraph reads, in part:

> Since every Man therefore lives after Death to Eternity, and according to his Life here hath his Place assigned to him either in Heaven or in Hell, and both these, as well as Heaven as Hell, must be in such a Form as to act as one, ... it follows, that the Human Race throughout the whole World is under the Auspices of the Lord, and that everyone, from his Infancy even to the End of his Life, is led of Him in the most minute Particulars, and his Place foreseen, and at the same Time provided

The underlined words again for Blake express the thought of predetermination in the mind of the Divine for the human beings concerned. He sees this not only in relation to heaven but to hell, and thus to the inhabitants there. His annotation reads:

Devil & Angels are Predestinated

It follows from what has always been stated in Divine Providence that life after death is determined by the life lived on earth. The place or time is not set, but the person's own life and choices make for the assigned place when death occurs. By adding the word 'devils' as well as 'angels' to those predestined, Blake is acknowledging the reality of Hell. This is a thought he was willing to accept, since his closing annotation to the work Divine Love and Wisdom reads, 'Heaven & Hell are born together'.

Within this same section Blake cites a paragraph without comment: this is paragraph 201, which in part reads:

> If it should be alledged, that the Divine Providence is an universal Government, and that not any Thing is governed but only kept in it's Connection, and the Things which relate to Government are disposed by others, can this be called an universal Government? No King hath such a Government as this; for if a King were to allow his Subjects to govern every Thing in his Kingdom, he would no longer be a King, but would only be called a King, therefore would have only a nominal Dignity and no real Dignity: Such a King cannot be said to hold the Government, much less universal Government

Reference to the above is made by Blake in his annotation to paragraph 220 (page 317), in support of what he reads. Paragraph 220 is found in Chapter Six which has the heading: 'The Divine Providence regards eternal things and not temporal things except so far as they accord with eternal things'. And the sub-section heading for the paragraph is 'The conjunction of temporal and eternal things in man is the Divine Providence of the Lord'. The passage reads in part, with words underlined by Blake, as follows:

> Dignities with their Honours are natural and temporary, when a Man personally respects himself in them, and not the State and Uses, for them a Man cannot but think interiorly with himself, that the State was made for him, and not he for the State: he is like a King <u>who</u> thinks his Kingdom and all the Men in it are for him, <u>and not he for</u> the Kingdom and all Men of which it consists

Blake adds his annotation as follows:

> He says at N 201 No King hath such a Government as this for all Kings are Universal in their Government otherwise they are No Kings

These passages show Blake's view that for Swedenborg, the Divine is in sole charge, and as such is able to dispose at will. A king holds office by the willingness of his subjects to serve him in freedom. But Blake is hinting that Swedenborg's paragraph 220 is inconsistent, for in

paragraph 201, the Divine demands service, while not allowing the subject the sense of freedom. Since there is a place and time for all, and it is predetermined, Blake sees here yet a further confirmation of the idea of Predestination.

Chapter Eight has the heading: 'The Laws of Permission are also the Laws of the Divine Providence". The sub-sectional heading, in which Blake's annotation is to be found, reads: 'A doubt may be raised against the Divine Providence from the fact that hitherto it has not been known that a man lives after death, and that this has not been disclosed before'. Blake draws a line over and brackets together certain words in the passage. Paragraph 274 (page 426) reads, in part, as follows:

> IV That a Doubt may be inferred against the Divine Providence, because it was not known heretofore, that Man liveth after Death; and this was not discovered till now. The Reason why this was not known, is, because in those who do not shun Evils as Sins, there lieth inwardly concealed a Belief, that Man doth not live after Death, and therefore they think it of no Importance, whether it be said that Man liveth after Death, or that he will rise again at the Day of Judgment: and if he happens to have any Belief in a Resurrection, he saith to himself, I shall not fare worse than others, for if I go to Hell, I shall have many to accompany me, and if to Heaven, it will be the same. But yet all who have any Religion, have in them an inherent Knowledge, that Men live after Death; the Idea that they live as Souls, and not as Men, takes Place only with those who are infatuated by their own Self-derived Intelligence, and with no others.

Blake adds his annotation,

> It was not Known & yet All Know

There is a sense of challenge in Blake's comments. Men were not aware that there was life after death until Swedenborg's revelation. Blake thinks, and Swedenborg himself says, men were aware of the fact, and that it was widely accepted. What Blake fails to note is that the idea may have been known to many, but the detail of that life was as yet not

known, until Swedenborg's revelations. The detailed information to be found in Heaven and Hell would not be common knowledge, even though the Bible does hint at a life after death, and the day of resurrection. The passage also reflects the attitude of men towards the after life, and the ready acceptance that their fate is sealed. Again, this passage for Blake, is confirmation of predestination.

'Evils are permitted for the sake of an end, which is salvation', is the heading to Chapter Nine. Blake's annotation is to be found in the sub-sectional heading: 'Every man is in evil, and must be led away from evil that he may be reformed'. Paragraph 277 (page 434) reads in part, with certain words underlined by Blake, as follows:

> That Man is to be withdrawn from Evil, in Order that he may be reformed, is evident without Explanation: for he who is in Evil in the Word, the same is in Evil after he goes out of the Word; wherefore if Evil be not removed in the World, it cannot be removed afterwards; where the Tree falls, there it lieth; so also it is with the Life of Man, as it was at his Death, such it remaineth; everyone also be judged according to his Actions, not that they are enumerated, but because he returns to them, and does the life again; for Death is a Continuation of life; with this Difference, that then Man cannot be reformed.

Blake adds the annotation:

> Predestination after this Life is more Abominable than Calvins & Swedenborg is Such a spiritual Predestinarian witness this Number & many others In 69 & 185 & 329 & 307
> Cursed Folly

Again Blake links Swedenborg with Calvin, as he did in his comments to paragraph 185, but he adds a further thought, 'spiritual Predestination'. This to Blake is 'Cursed Folly'. Blake notes Swedenborg's view that all reform takes place in this world and not after it, for he underlines those words; but with no future hope of reform and salvation, Blake can only see the emphasis yet again on predestination, and what is more, that Swedenborg is declaring 'spiritual predestination'. Blake is mis-reading the situation, for

according to the life and actions on earth, man will determine for himself through choice, his life and actions in the after life. This is not the removing of freedom, which is dear to Blake's heart, but allowing man to exercise his desire, and thus be responsible for the outcome.

Blake's next annotation is found in Chapter Ten which has the heading: 'The Divine Providence is equally with the wicked and with the good'. In the sub-section to paragraph 307 (pages 496-497) we read: 'The Lord governs in hell as to their interiors but not as to their exteriors'. In part, the paragraph reads as follows:

> That the Wicked, who are in the World, are governed in Hell by the Lord: the Reason is, because Man with Respect to his Spirit is in the Spiritual World, and there in some Society, in an infernal Society if he is wicked, and in a celestial Society if good; for the Mind of Man, which itself is Spiritual, cannot be any where but among Spirits, into whose Society it comes also after Death; that this is the Case, hath also been said and shewn above. But Man is not there like one of the Spirits who is inscribed into the Society, for Man is continually in a State of Reformation, wherefore according to his Life and the Changes thereof, he is translated by the Lord from one Society of Hell to another, if he is wicked; but if he suffers himself to be reformed, he is led out of Hell and introduced into Heaven, and there also he is translated from one Society to another, and this until the Time of his Death, after which he is no longer carried from one Society to another, because he is then no longer in any State of Reformation, but remains in that in which he is according to his Life; wherefore when a Man dies, he is inscribed in his own place.

Towards the end of the passage Blake writes his annotation: 'Predestination'.

In this passage mention has been made of the governing of hell through opposites, and Blake uses the term 'contraries' in his Marriage of Heaven and Hell, which he sees not as opposites but as complementary. Does mention here of opposites sow the seed for Marriage, bearing in mind the final comment to Divine Love and Wisdom that 'Heaven and

Hell are born together'? Certainly, Blake has not deviated in his condemnation of Swedenborg, within this work, that he is a predestinarian, and a spiritual one to boot!

The final annotation made by Blake in his reading of Divine Providence is found in Chapter Twelve, with the heading: 'Everyman may be reformed, and there is no such thing as predestination'. Paragraph 329 (page 566) has the heading: 'Thus all are predestined to heaven and no one to hell'. The paragraph reads, in part:

> there is no wanting to any Man a Knowledge of the Means whereby he may be saved, nor the Power of being saved if he will; from which it follows, that all are predestined or intended for Heaven, and none for Hell. But forasmuch as there prevails among some a Belief in Predestination to no Salvation, which is Predestination to Damnation, and such a Belief is hurtful, and cannot be dispelled, unless Reason also sees the Madness and Cruelty of it, therefore it shall be treated of in the following Series. 1. That any other Predestination, than Predestination to Heaven, is contrary to the Divine Love and it's Infinity. 2. That any other Predestination, than Predestination to Heaven, is contrary to the Divine Wisdom and it's Infinity. 3. That it is an insane Heresy, to suppose that they only are saved who are born within the Church. 4. That it is a cruel Heresy, to suppose that any of the human Race are predestined to be damned.

To this Blake adds his annotation:

> Read N 185 & There See how Swedenborg contradicts himself & (smudge) N 69 See also. 277 & 203 where he Says that a Place for Each Man is foreseen and at the same time provided

In this annotation Blake is adamant that Swedenborg does teach predestination, even if in the paragraph the contrary is expressed. To Blake's mind, a time and place means predestination. Swedenborg completely denies the doctrine, for he sees it to be hurtful and cruel. He will not even allow those in the church to think they have a privilege that is denied those in other faiths. The life and action is the determining fact for the future life. The Love and Wisdom of God

cares for all, and seeks to give the promise of eternal life to all. Only those who desire the opposite to heaven, find their final abode in hell. It is no predestination but one of choice on the part of the individual. Blake appears to miss this point altogether, yet he was very much the individual, believing in the rights of the individual. Much of what Swedenborg is saying in Divine Providence, Blake would readily endorse: but he gives the label 'predestination' to that which he cannot stomach. The repeated use by Swedenborg of the phrase 'place and time provided' catches Blake's blind spot, and Swedenborg is condemned outright as a 'spiritual predestinarian'.

A thread running through many of the annotations is Blake's dislike of the idea that after death no change can take place: everything is settled for ever. He had concluded his reflections on Divine Love and Wisdom with the annotation, 'Heaven & Hell are born together', in the individual. Thus Blake envisages heaven and hell as continuing with the individual for ever, since this is a necessary part of the dynamic process of man's existence. Swedenborg had stated that after death 'Man cannot be reformed' (Divine Providence 277). In this Blake can see no flexibility in Swedenborg's view of the afterlife. The fixed place to be occupied in heaven or hell, is suggestive of some mechanical process.

Associated also with this thought is Swedenborg's view that the ruling love is the determining factor in man's future life. Blake cannot accept this, because everything becomes fixed, certain and above all determined. Swedenborg stated that hell 'is opposite to a certain place in Heaven' (paragraph 69), and that 'the Lord forsees man's state after death and provides for it from his birth right on to the end of his life'. (Paragraph 333) Blake finds the logical paradox very

difficult to accept: that of God's foreknowledge of an individual destination or salvation, and the idea that God does not predestine that fate.

Blake's blind spot in this direction forces him to be unreasonable in what he is demanding, if the annotations are a guide: for he is out to make Swedenborg a predestinarian. Indeed, no christian theodicy would stand the test Blake is setting. Swedenborg would make the distinction between Divine Omniscience, in which he believed, and Predestination in which he did not believe. The former is compatible with human freedom, the latter is not. Blake will seek his own answer to 'spiritual predestination' in the unfolding of his work The Marriage of Heaven and Hell. In his annotations he is clearly taking a transitional stance, and breaking away from the strong bond he might have with Swedenborgian thought, and with Swedenborgians in general. He is seeking to mould and fashion his own thinking and expression, rather than becoming enslaved by another man's system.

Section 4: Blake's use of Swedenborgian ideas

13: Swedenborgian Songs

a) Songs of Innocence

b) Songs of Experience

14: The Marriage of Heaven and Hell

15: Swedenborgian Symbols

16: Blake's ambivalence

13. Swedenborgian Songs

The eighteenth century placed a great deal of reliance on the understanding, for this was the age of reason which presented a considered view of man. He was an intelligent animal, the outcome of his education and conditioning, and by acceptance of the current moral behaviour, all was well with him. Blake's challenge sees the need for restraint of self interest. The inner impulses, as expressions of affection and sympathy, could set the tone for the form of conduct. In the Songs Blake sought to present what the age chose to ignore; that return to the childhood state of innocence. It was not that men should become childish, but that the moments of innocence gave purpose to life.

The Songs are in effect Blake's own answer to the perennial question: what is man? In the presentation of the two contrary states of the human soul, which is mentioned in the title of the work, Blake is revealing a state of mind. But it is not the state of mind of an individual, but of mankind as a whole. So Blake does not show rounded characters, nor are elaborate descriptions given; but in the simple commonplace language of the monosyllabic and the repetitious, a challenge is offered to the reader; there is a need to comprehend what is written and then become involved in the subject matter of the poem. The contrary states give the notion that both states are true and real. The choice rests with the reader.

The state of Innocence is not one of ignorance and naivete, but of knowing; but it is not the 'knowing' of Experience. It is not being unaware and therefore leaving out of account; it is an invitation to examine the purpose and the outcome of it all. Innocence is the child in adult contemplation. Innocence is the state of wisdom not of

ignorance; it is the ideal. Innocence engages the imagination; Experience is concerned for itself and its own advantage. An innocent mind knows God, because it knows the virtue of delight. The mind of experience has lost all its virtues and resources, and must rely on the power of the understanding. Blake avoids the mystery in Innocence, for the child lacks understanding, and so the presentation is that of realities. In Experience he mocks mystery for the mature self is aware of life. Even the religion of Experience is little more than power, prohibition and control. Experience does not create the ideal, it merely accepts the principle. If one responded to the child, in the visionary moment of the adult, then something superior to understanding would be discerned. This is possible because the adult is more imaginative than the child.

In 1789-90 when Songs of Innocence was engraved, the children's book trade was flourishing. Blake had done some engraving for Mary Wollstonecraft's book Original Stories from Real Life. The radical publisher, Joseph Johnson,also commissioned Blake on three occasions to engrave illustrations for children's books. Was it such work that made Blake turn to his own production of Songs? He was certainly proficient in the sophisticated poetic forms of Poetical Sketches, yet he turned to this new form. There is the reflection in Songs of the eighteenth century children's verse: and the introduction promises 'Every child may joy to hear'. But the aim was rather directed at the parent than the child. Formally published children's books cost two shillings and six or more; no child could afford that. Blake's Songs was published at five shillings. As Plumb remarks, 'Children do not buy books, adults do'.[1] The work was produced with the adult in mind, praising as it did the virtues they hoped to inculcate in their offspring.

Gilchrist says that the Songs were done up in blue-grey paper covers by Mrs. Blake's hand, forming an octavo volume. The poet and his wife did everything in the making of the book - writing, designing, engraving, printing, everything except the manufacture of the paper, for the very ink, or rather, colour, they made themselves. Never before was a man so literally involved in the making of his own book.

Gilchrist speaks of 'The Lamb' as 'a sweet hymn of tender infantine sentiment':[2] Allan Cunningham in the Life praised it for its 'religious tenderness of sentiment'.[3] If we contrast Wesley's 'Gentle Jesus meek and mild' with Blake's 'The Lamb', the marked difference becomes apparent. Blake creates the feeling of children with his repetition and half rhythms, but in structure it is the didactic form of question and answer. There is a challenge to the perceptions found in Wesley's argument. The mystery of the Incarnation is present in Wesley's hymn, with Christ the child as the example for other children. Not so for Blake. His answers to the lamb are not dogmatic assertions, but rather show the 'extraneousness of such assertions'.[4] So if Blake takes on the forms, and accepted usage, his purpose is totally different in character.

It would be wrong to look upon the Songs of Innocence as the outpourings of a naive child; that is only the appearance. Nor is Songs of Experience to be viewed as the bitter disillusionment resulting from maturity. Blake is a literary poet and his work is not spontaneous, but involves his imagination long before it reaches the etched page.

For Blake the realm of imagination is the realm of the spiritual world, that continuous source of energy. He was no mystic in the accepted sense. He believed that his communication with God was

not for him alone, but must become the experience for his poetic material. The genuine mystic would not take this view; indeed, he would call it inadequate. Poets, mystics, and visionaries are not one and the same, even if at times the appearance seems so. It is worth noting that Blake does not speak of mysticism, but of 'visionary art'. The visionary creates and describes the spiritual world, so that he can transform this perception into the symbols of his communications. Blake therefore must be seen more as perceptive than contemplative.[5]

Blake was a natural visionary and literary and philosophic influences only added to his innate gift. In Poetical Sketches the influence of men like Spenser and Shakespeare can be seen. The Bible was his constant companion. But his emergence as a symbolic poet does not rest solely on literary influences; the environment of the day was in itself an indirect influence. There was the contrast made between the scientific-material approach to the world and man, which Blake detested, and the spiritual faith-like approach of the evangelicals, for which Blake had great sympathy. His association with the Swedenborgian movement, which is the only recorded institution he is known ever to have attended, shows that the work of this visionary held a fascination for him, not only as a young man but even in old age.

Would such influences give structure to a plan or schema for his own work? Critics tend to desire the systematic presentation of all his works. This may be most convenient for examination purposes, but how real was that for Blake? Did he have a schema? It is not difficult to place his work into a scheme, and various schemes spring to mind; chronological, or subject matter, and influences, that is the bearing of the influence of others directly or indirectly on his writings and drawings. One of the dangers in any of these approaches is to make

Blake's work conform to a pre-determined plan, with no scope to reflect on later development. The mature Blake was not the youth, nor did the inexperienced youthful spirit always remain with him. The revolutionary nature of some of his work might reflect the idealism of youth, but in presentation of thought there is reflection and maturity which would not be found in youth. Nor does it allow for Blake's own spiritual development. Indeed, when requested to furnish a list of his works currently available, Blake is known to have missed out works which had previously appeared; for instance, Milton gives way to Jerusalem, and The Marriage of Heaven and Hell is not be found in many lists. Does this imply that the plates were lost, so they could not be included? Or had his own interest in the subject so diminished that it was no longer of interest to him? Or it could be that Blake himself was repudiating some of his earlier work. In other words, he had outgrown the thought of the period in which the work was executed. This is common with many writers and artists who simply regard their early work as a state of apprenticeship or of experimentation. In their maturer years they do not feel they want the earlier work to receive the credit of their later endeavours.

Words, phrases, images and motifs in Blake's verse, and drawings, express the various purposes he had in mind at the time of their execution. There can be difficulty, therefore, in equating one work with another, especially when they come from different periods of his life.[6] Naturally he may borrow from earlier works, but it does not follow that in context it will be the same usage. For instance, the phrase 'infant joy' does not have the same meaning in Songs of Innocence as it has in say Jerusalem. As Hirsch comments, 'mention of a star, a predatory animal, or a fiery figure, does not necessarily mean the same

thing', and there is no reason that it should.[7] A symbol is not reality in a concrete form, though it may be the reality as viewed in the spiritual form, with which the spiritual eye perceives all things.

It is not easy to establish a definite order for the Songs before 1815; after that date all but one issue of Songs of Innocence and Songs of Experience followed a recognised order.[8] In Songs of Innocence there appears to be a tendency to progress from happy songs ('The Shepherd', 'The Echoing Green', 'The Lamb') to less happy ones containing a mixture of joy and sorrow ('Night', 'A Dream', 'On Another's Sorrow'). But it would be difficult to press consistency because other poems so easily disrupt a precise division. Therefore, it would be futile, bearing in mind Blake's consistent changing of the order of the songs, to seek any firm conclusions. Or was it that the collation was left to Catherine, and she took the plates to hand, when ready, without any real order in the binding of them? Each copy Blake printed would be different, for in hand printing there would be varying pressure, and in the colouring of each plate being individually executed, there would again be a difference. Out of twenty-three songs in Songs of Experience there are only nineteen in the extant copies, two being transferred to Songs of Experience in 1794 ('The Little Girl Lost' and 'The Little Girl Found'). Frustration thus remains with those who would press an order on the songs, with the object of maintaining a given thesis. Overall, the poems can be read as individual items, with the unity of a given theme - 'that every child shall sing'.

When completed Songs of Innocence was first published as a separate work, but when Blake had completed Songs of Experience he did not publish it as a separate work.[9] The two works were combined, and henceforth issued as one volume, under the title Songs of Innocence and

of Experience. Blake in fact was never to publish again Songs of Innocence as a separate work. He also gave a sub-title to the new work: 'Shewing the Two Contrary States of the Human Soul'. This title hints at a scheme, a prepared schema; more so, when you note that several of the poems of Innocence are transferred to Experience in the combined work. Blake is certainly placing his imprint on the work, no doubt reflecting his own feelings at the time. But surprisingly enough, this does not prevent him from making further changes as the work is republished. The only justification for this, save lost plates, is to accept that it is a question of spiritual development in his thinking. Though Songs show the inmost state of the soul, this does in no way make it fixed or a permanent entity. There is spiritual warfare in the struggle between these states. No one can remain in the state of innocence, 'but it can be re-entered through the understanding of experience.'[10] The Songs demonstrate the development that can take place as experience further discovers the reality of true innocence. In this way Blake could be confirming the point made by Swedenborg that the human soul develops from the innocence of ignorance to the innocence of wisdom, which is the wisdom of heaven. R.F. Gleckner speaks of the movement from 'unrecognised innocence' to the experience of "the higher innocence',[11] and makes the following comment:

> In the progression from childhood to maturity and marriage, from innocence to experience to a higher innocence of wisdom, there are two main ideas which predominate, joy and love...The happiness of the child in innocence is by nature selfish and instinctive, although...that selfishness is not a conscious attitude...from the advent of experience on, man can experience a happiness much greater than can ever be known by the child, for it is no longer selfish and instinctive but inclusive and imaginative.[12]

The state of experience becomes a state of disillusionment and at the same time bears the beginnings of a new perspective on the

future. The dilemma is whether to remain in the known or to venture into the unknown. For progress man must pass from innocence to experience, in order to gain the higher or spiritual wisdom. In the progression he will lose his self love and selfishness which is continually preventing him gaining his spiritual potential. The true realisation of self comes from wisdom; here Swedenborg makes the distinction between the nature-selfish-proprium, with which man is born, and the spiritual-selfless-proprium, that spiritual-angelic selfhood which man can attain. And the power to change rests in love and its activity. But love that is grounded in the innocence of ignorance is selfish: that which comes with experience, in which love finds its object, is no longer in ignorance or unorganised. Swedenborg states the two loves and their opposites or contraries as follows:

> There are two distinct kinds of love in heaven - love of the Lord and love of the neighbour...but man is not born to those two kinds of love, but their contraries, self-love and the love of the world.[13]

Blake recognised that without contraries there could be no progression. This may be seen as the resolution which comes out of conflict, and in which there is the hope of becoming wiser. Or it could reflect Blake's own reading of Swedenborg, and the impact it had upon him. Certainly the sub-title is only added to the completed work, and the use of the words 'Innocence' and 'Experience' suggests purpose behind Blake's presentation. This has led a writer like Kathleen Raine to speak of the Songs as 'Swedenborgian Songs'. Before examining this claim it should be noted that at the same time as Blake was writing Songs he was also producing a second series of There is no natural religion.

The second series may be no more than a whim; that desire to make a better production or presentation. But the extent of the changes would suggest a new wave of inspiration which could only find fulfilment

in the execution of new plates. The recasting is less an attack on natural religion, and more the vigorous affirmation of a newly found confidence in the world. In other words, Blake has changed his mind. Is he himself able to recognise that a move has been made in his own thinking from ignorance to wisdom?

Blake was not an 'anti-rationalist', for he did not glory in 'unreason'. But he is conscious that man could easily deceive himself once he rejected faith and inspiration. At the time the deistic view held sway that religion came from natural explanation: the experience of man and not revelation or innate ideas. Such philosophic thinking was based on Locke's Essay concerning Human Understanding. In the argument Blake admits that moral sense is not inborn. Locke accepted that what man is naturally, that is what he is. The establishment accepted the natural or rational view of religion. For Blake such mechanistic thinking was but the "Ratio', that measurable relationship between things. It did not account for their origin or their continuing presence. As Blake remarked, 'He who sees the Ratio only, sees himself only'.[14] Thus Blake extends his first proposition to read as follows:

> I. Man's perceptions are not bounded by organs of perception; he percieves more than sense (tho' ever so acute) can discover.

Blake may be using Lockean terms in his counter argument, but he shows that they are not what they seem. In the first edition, proposition three reads:

> III. From a perception of only 3 senses or 3 elements none could deduce a fourth or fifth.

Though Locke sought to reduce all things to the simplest state, the explanation of the spiritual and the imperceptible required a little more, to Blake's mind, than 'sensation or reflective' states, as he demonstrated in proposition four:

IV. None could have other than natural or organic thoughts if he had none but organic perceptions.

Blake may be dialectic in his thinking, but this was how he saw the world. The dialectical approach was for him the method of argument and at the same time the method of perception. There was a contradiction and an opposition in all things. So the key phrases are 'Without Contraries is no progression' and 'Opposition is true friendship'. In the paradox truth is expressed; there is an interrelationship with the suspicion of the absolute. Above all the dialectic thinker sees things ever changing, and Blake saw both the change and the permanency of God's creation. Some have suggested that this dialectic approach may come from Swedenborg's writings, with their concentration on opposites (good and evil, truth and falsity, spiritual and natural, heaven and hell). But it can be traced further back than Swedenborg, since Blake is endeavouring 'to Restore what the Ancients called the Golden Age'.[15]

Kathleen Raine speaks of Blake's Songs as Swedenborgian Songs.[16] This is not to say that there is literary value in Swedenborg's symbols or visions; but here was raw material from which Blake could draw. The Divine power, or influx as Swedenborg termed it, was for Blake the divine fountain of being flowing into man as "a form and origin of life'.[17] The divine influx upholds the universe. For Swedenborg 'the whole natural world corresponds to the spiritual world'.[18] This relationship, which Blake sees as a 'divine analogy', excites the poet for he perceives here the relationship between the image and its inner spiritual meaning and context. Blake selects the Swedenborgian correspondences because for him they fall between the total visionary, as implied by influx, and the arbitrary. Thus as Kathleen Raine sees it:

> Vine, oak, rose and myrtle, thorns, thistles, brambles, and nettles - all the vegetation of Blake's contrasting worlds of Innocence and Experience - belong to this language, half fitting, half arbitrary.[19]

Equally, she is aware that some of these images and symbols can be found in the Bible, both in the Old Testament and the New. For example, Jesus' comment: 'Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles'? (Matthew 7.16) But the Swedenborgian usage sees a clearer definition; 'thorns and thistles signify a curse and vastation'.[20] This usage is not far from Blake's own application:

> Then I went to the heath & the wild
> To the thistles & thorns of the waste
> And they told how they were beguil'd,
> Driven out, & compel'd to be be chaste[21]

Blake so often saw nature through the symbol; for him the vine was a powerful biblical symbol, to such an extent that he had a vine in Lambeth which he allowed no one to prune; the vine to him was life.

Kathleen Raine is also of the opinion that the colours used by Blake in Songs hold a Swedenborgian influence:

> The colours red, blue, and golden white signify, respectively, love, wisdom, and the celestial state that is above both. When these colours are clear and radiant, the states of the soul to which they belong are likewise of a high order.[22]

While Swedenborg does so speak of the spiritual use of colour, it is difficult to so generalize in Blake's work, since being hand painted each page is slightly different from its corresponding page in another copy of the same work. Murky and dark colours could so easily be applied to hellish states, and the reds and light colours expressing the essence of heaven, as the abode of love. Blue is the expression of wisdom. In the Frontispiece to Innocence and Experience, we have the rosy-clad figure of one, and the blue clad figure of the other, showing that love is the essence of innocence, and wisdom the essence of

experience. Wicksteed also went so far as to note the position of the figures within the composition, and used the Swedenborgian device of right and left, to express wisdom and love.[23]

A Swedenborgian influence would be clearly marked in the Songs, for at no other time in his life was Blake closer to Swedenborgian ideas: nor had he so many Swedenborgian friends. But Blake set himself the task of creating rather than being content simply to use the ideas of another, no matter how noble they might be. So, Kathleen Raine's use of 'Swedenborgian Songs' might be too strong a title to apply to Blake's Songs. But that is not to deny that in her research she brought to light a number of incidents and devices which point directly to Swedenborg as the source of the raw material Blake was to use in the fashioning of Songs.

Blake was detached from the polite literary culture of his day. He warmed to the radicalism of Tom Paine, 'every man's mind his own church', as W.H. Reid expressed it.[24] The sectarian movements in the wake of the French Revolution pointed to a new age dawning. The popular prophetic movements such as those of Richard Brothers and the Swedenborgians declared the awakening of a new spirit in man and the descent of the New Jerusalem. Scientists had shunned the world of the unseen, the mysterious, the visionary, the signatories (as Boehme called them), for the more concrete and material world of measurement. Blake scorned them; his visions were real to him, and in them is seen his own reaction to the alchemical speculations of Boehme, and his own alternative vision against the radical controlling system of the Swedenborgians. He creates his own system in the visionary simplicity of a child's book. But the influence of the times is not far removed from him as he grasps for the forms to express his deep spiritual

yearnings.

The Introduction to Songs of Innocence, sometimes called 'The Piper' is heavily influenced by the biblical passage of Luke 7.31-35:

> To what then shall I liken this generation? And what are they like? They are like children sitting in the market place, calling to one another and saying: 'We have piped for you, and you have not danced; we have sung dirges and you have not wept'.

The Biblical allusion in Blake's poem is no accident. Blake desired to speak 'to this generation", who appeared to be spiritually bankrupt. There is a lack of response in whatever is said to them. They gain not from experience, nor is innocence to be found in them. They are hovering between the two, as is the case in the Lukan passage. Other themes, which can again be found in Luke, occur in the Songs; for instance the 'lost and found', 'night and dawn', rejection through 'colour or race'.[25]

The Introduction is equally a song about poetry, imagination, and vision. Wicksteed speaks of it as the human soul (Blake) descending into a valley (earth), discovering through the aid of heaven the Lamb of God, and being inspired to be a mission of joy.[26] The Piper sees not merely a cloud, but the child on the cloud. The child is real and his relationship to the cloud and to the viewer, the Piper, expresses the bridge between single and twofold vision. Single vision would be the cloud alone; but the child helps bridge the gulf, that we are seeing into the spiritual. The invitation is given to move on from the external to the internal: the Piper is challenged to remain in the obscure situation or to see in true light. Here is Blake's challenge to 'this generation'.

It is not difficult to read here Swedenborgian overtones. The symbol of the 'cloud' is that of the letter of Scripture, the natural

sense, which holds within it the spiritual sense.[27] This inner sense is living and vibrant; the child sitting on the cloud is alive, so the child becomes an expression of innocence. But the innocence of ignorance is the invitation to move on to the innocence of wisdom, which is true heavenly wisdom. Swedenborg's Memorable Relations are fashioned in the invitation to view; the veil is put aside that things of interior knowledge may be made known.

The 'valley' is the natural world, the body: in Swedenborgian terms "The Divine Natural and Sensual principle'.[28] It is the lowest, the outermost. Its essence lies in the fact that this is the first in creation and its development within the individual. The child may be in a state of selfishness, but it is through ignorance, so the 'valley wild' appears to be happy. But the 'valleys dark' are of fallen man, who has cast aside his innocence. As Blake remarks in Jerusalem 'the perturbed Man away turns down the valley dark' (K 627).

The qualities to be found in Songs of Innocence and of Experience are simplicity of form, purity of diction and boldness and brevity of illustration; these are the qualities of vision. Innocence to Blake is a complex thing; it is vision, a sense of eternity, which cannot be captured again except through the 'poetic genius'; it is love and forgiveness, the absence of the ideas of good and evil; there is the ready response and energy. Identity is lacking because the child is one with the horse, a dandelion, or an earwig. It is grown ups who separate and identify. As Bernard Blackstone expressed it:

> To accept, to trust, to believe, to love: these are the prerogatives of innocence. To suffer, to doubt, to sin, to hate: these are the activities of experience.[29]

Blake's social conscience is alive in Experience with the evils of poverty, the exploitation of the poor and their children. A child finds

the ale house warmer than the Church; a little chimney sweep is 'a little black thing among the snow'; the charity children sing, but 'Can it be a song of joy?' asks Blake.

Blake inserts in 'The Island in the Moon' three songs which later appear in Songs of Innocence: 'Holy Thursday' which is sung by Obtuse Angle, 'Nurse's Song', sung by Mrs. Nannicantipot, and 'The Little Boy Lost', sung by Quid. Except for a few minor changes these poems are identical to those published, which shows that Blake was not averse to using his poems more than once. In the Notebook are found early drafts of poems, some of which never saw the light of day in published form. In the so called 'Pickering MSS', there is 'Auguries of Innocence", which contains lines second only to 'Lamb', 'Tyger' and 'And did those feet' in the minds of the general public acknowledging Blake to be a great English poet:

> To see a World in a Grain of Sand
> And a Heaven in a Wild Flower
> Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand
> And Eternity in an hour.[30]

a) The Songs of Innocence

In the 'Introduction' to Songs of Innocence the 'Piper Song ' gives the sense of gay abandonment, because there is a strong feeling of security within the child.Innocence offers the security which Experience seeks to regain; and through education Experience can regain that sense of lost security. The 'Introduction' to Songs of Experience gives the Bard, recalling the Fall and Earth's lamentation on its fallen state, that real sense of loss and security.

Plate 4 Introduction

In the 'Piper Song' there is music, which descends to song, which descends still further to writing, and this is embodied in a book of the songs themselves. 'And I wrote my happy songs', says Blake. Songs embody poetry, imagination and vision as a cycle. As Wicksteed aptly put it: 'We can only sing when we cease to pipe, we can only write when we wake from dream'. This idea of descent may be related to a Swedenborgian idea concerning divine truth, which Blake may have heard discussed among his Swedenborgian friends. Truth begins with the Divine and by degrees is received in the perception of truth in the minds of men.

> Truth Divine is not of one degree, but of several: Truth Divine in the first degree, and also in the second, is what immediately proceeds from the Lord; this is above angelic understanding. Truth Divine in the third degree is such as in the inmost or third heaven; this is such that nothing of it can be apprehended by man. Truth Divine in the fourth degree is such as it is in the middle or second heaven; neither is this intelligible to man. Truth Divine in the fifth degree is such as is in the ultimate or first heaven; this may for some little while be perceived by man, but by one enlightened; and yet it is such that a great part of it cannot be uttered by human words; but when it falls into ideas it produces a faculty of perceiving and also believing that it is so. And Truth Divine in the sixth degree is such as is with man,

> accommodated to his perception; thus it is in the sense of the letter of the Word. This sense or this truth is represented by a cloud; and the interior truths by the glory in the cloud. Hence it is that Jehovah, that is the Lord, so often appeared to Moses and to the children of Israel in a cloud.[1]

As was stated earlier, the incident in Luke VII, verses 31-35 is not far from the raw material of this poem. The present generation did not listen to Jesus, as they listened not to the piping of the children in the Lukan episode. But Blake's age is equally spiritually bankrupt, and not ready to respond to the piping and the dancing.

Does the 'wild' and the 'pleasant', the 'merry', 'happy' and full of 'joy' express the progressive states required in unorganised innocence to reach its goal? The piping is but of one song, 'about a lamb". In biblical terms the 'Lamb', is 'the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world'; it is the title of Jesus Christ. It is also the glorious song sung of the Lamb in Revelation 7 and 19:

> Let us rejoice and be glad
> and give him glory,
> For the wedding of the Lamb has come
> ......
> Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding
> supper of the Lamb

Blake's threefold vision embraces child, lamb and Christ:

> For he calls himself a Lamb:
> He is meek & he is mild,
> He became a little child:
> I a child & thou a lamb,
> We are called by his name.

In stanzas two and three the same song is sung; one with 'merry chear' and the other with 'happy chear'; the former is accompanied by pipes, the latter unaccompanied. Is there here the same truth but read at two levels? The things of spirit are highest and inmost, but they require an external form in order to be seen and apprehended. The relevance to 'book' in stanza four shows how the

permanent record may be recaptured for the experience of others in the future. One may see it in juxtaposition with the Word of God: a book with inner as well as an outer meaning, yet read by individuals on varying levels.

The child-spirit descends in the **'Introduction'** to invite the poet to 'Pipe a song about a Lamb', and then to write 'In a book that all may read'. This reflection of command and action, while following the pattern of many of the Old Testament prophets, could be, as Kathleen Raine suggests, similar to the 'Memorable Relations' found in Swedenborg's writings. In these relations Swedenborg speaks of angels and spirits, and after conversation and the offering of information, they vanish from his sight. After the child on the cloud has given Blake the instruction, he vanishes from sight.

In single vision only the cloud would be seen; in twofold vision there is a child on the cloud, and he is laughing. The child-spirit rides on the cloud, as like the 'clouds of heaven" in a Biblical context. For Blake this is a symbol of communication. For Swedenborg, clouds express obscurity and the state of enlightenment that can come forth; the true meaning of scripture is covered in the 'clouds of the letter of the Word", in order to protect it. Blake makes fullest use of clouds and their associated spirits both in his poetry and his designs. He reflects Swedenborg's own use of the appearance of white clouds in heaven and the thick and black showers in hell. In Marriage Blake states:

> Once I saw a Devil in a flame of fire, who arose before an Angel that sat on a cloud.

Lest the vision should fail Blake is commanded to write in a 'book" for all to read, and his creative steps are seen in his plucking a hollow reed and turning it into a 'rural pen", and then with the use of clear

water which he "stain'd', recording the event. Here is an example of Blake's own creative system:

> until the hollow reed is filled with ink no engraved line can be made.

Clouds appear to hold a fascination for Blake in his frequent use of the image. In his reading of Divine Love and Wisdom he marked a passage relating to a cloud and the image of God; the extract though not stated comes from A Continuation of the Last Judgment. Swedenborg relates that the Africans were told that in some folklore there was the idea of God as a cloud; the Africans found this incredible. Blake expresses his own sympathy with them when in the margin he writes:

> Think of a white cloud as being holy, you cannot love it; but think of a holy man within the cloud, love springs to your thoughts, for to think of holiness distinct from man is impossible to the affections, Thought alone can make monsters, but affections cannot.[2]

There is a child on the cloud, and he is laughing: there cannot be a finer expression of life than that.

Plate 5 The Shepherd

"The Shepherd' may reflect the 23rd Psalm or John 10 and the 'Good Shepherd'. And the lamb is as much the 'Lamb of God", as any woolly creature of the meadows. In Innocence the images are of children and animals, with the conflict of parent and child, man and his environment, youthful rebellion and the hope for the future.

The pastoral image of quietness, peace and contentment, is one which all poets have used: Blake reflects on the tranquillity of the scene, with the lamb calling to the ewe and the reply. And overall there is the presence of the Shepherd giving a sense of security to the scene: nothing will harm or disturb while he is present. Here is Blake's own belief in Jesus, and his presence and power is captured in this poem. He sensed that Jesus watched over him, as a shepherd his

flock. These opening poems show that Blake intended that the image of the lamb would be central.

Plate 6 and 7 The Ecchoing Green

In 'The Ecchoing Green', the lamb may not be present, but in memory it is the sheep who graze on the Green. This poem is the recall of memory, showing the feeling of lost innocence in the maturer states of experience:

> Such were the joys,
> When we all, girls & boys,
> In our youth time were seen,
> On the Ecchoing Green.

The cycle of the poem is one day, with 'The Sun does arise' and 'The sun does descend', and the Green disappears in the darkness of the night. For Blake here is the image of that 'circle of destiny' to which all flesh is heir.

Old John with his white hair must be content in recalling, for even in Spring he cannot sport on the green in the brilliance of the sunshine. Like other 'old folk' he is bogged down with the cares of the natural world. Vicariously his memory enacts what once was, but can be no more. There is nothing of the forward looking of 'The Piper Song'. Experience cannot laugh away life, only the inner vision, which is not memory, can recapture the innocence of childhood. There was joy in the innocence, but it is now lost, and 'sport no more is seen'.

The innocence of ignorance must give way to the innocence of wisdom, in the course of man's regeneration: if it does not happen, man does not fulfil his spiritual potential. Man must be 're-born', 'born from above', 'born again', 'regenerated'. Blake was fully aware of the biblical image and of the Swedenborgian idea of progressive states in regeneration. The memory speaks only of the natural world, the spirit

of the spiritual world and the future. Spring is the natural symbol of hope and the re-awakening to life: the cold, dark winter is over, and new life begins in Spring: it is the symbol of recreation. And it is to this symbol that Blake uses, when Old John sits and reflects on the Ecchoing Green 'to welcome the Spring'. The following passage from Heaven and Hell, a volume of Swedenborg's works that Blake possessed, relates to the symbol of spring:

> The four seasons of the year, called spring, summer, autumn, and winter; the four times of the day, called morning, noon, evening, night; and with the four ages of man, called infancy, youth, manhood, and old age; and with all other things that either exist from time, or follow in succession according to time. In thinking of these a man thinks from time, and an angel from state. Therefore whatever is from time in these things with man, is changed into an idea respecting state with an angel; spring and morning are changed into an idea of the state of love and wisdom, as they are in the first state with the angels; summer and noon are changed into an idea of love and wisdom as they are in the second state; autumn and evening as they are in the third state; night and winter into an idea of such a state as exists in hell.[3]

Plate 8 The Lamb

In the introduction, or 'Piper Song', Blake stated that his songs would be about a lamb: one such song has that title, 'The Lamb'. The creature of the field becomes but the expression of the deepest symbol of Christ himself; he is the Lamb of God. Here for Blake is faith and belief, as well as representation and a close acquaintance with the Bible itself. Jean Hagstrum stated:

> Blake read the Bible, but he also saw it. The white pages came stained with colour and scored with lines, for Blake's Bible was also the Bible of Raphael, Michelangelo, and the great masters of Western religious art.[4]

The Bible was the source of many oils and watercolours, embodying the sublime themes of that book. And each artist interpreted according to his own lights.

Jesus was the all in all for Blake; he <u>is</u> God. And the identity of creation and creator is strong in this poem. Blake sees himself as only a part of creation, causing him to have respect for all of creation. 'I a child and thou a lamb' (was he ever a vegetarian?). The warmth by which he described the lamb expressed the warmth he sensed Christ had for him. The lamb is for Blake the expression of true innocence. And in <u>Heaven and Hell</u> Blake would have read, 'all innocence is from the Lord. Thus it is that in the Word the Lord is called the 'Lamb', for a lamb signifies innocence'.5

G. Keynes describes 'The Lamb' as 'Blake's most triumphantly successful' poem.[6] In the use of 'I' Blake introduces a personal note showing him now more than a mere observer.

In the poem the child is aware that he is like the creator. There is a gentleness, a concern, and a caring. Here is the reader invited to call upon experience for confirmation. In contrast, in 'The Tyger' there is the questioning of the creator's rationale - 'what immortal hand or eye' could create such a creature, which has such perfect symmetry of marking and yet is such a terrifying beast? Had Blake seen a tiger in a zoo? There was a zoo in the Tower of London.

George Stubbs exhibits his painting 'The Tyger' at the Society of Artists of Great Britain in Somerset Street in 1769. Blake was then a boy of twelve years old, and in his second year at Par's drawing school, which was held at the same house as the Society. There could therefore be echoes of the glorious beast in Blake's poem. The subject was very fashionable at the end of the eighteenth century. Blake's tyger stalks the forest at night so removed from the light of the spiritual sun.

The reader for whom the tiger might well be unknown in the

flesh, the poem itself would create the feeling of a wild beast. Yet there is no denying the contrast between 'The Lamb' and 'The Tyger' in the innocence and gentleness and the cunning and power. The animals could easily express the state of innocence and the state of experience, or the state of heaven and the state of hell.

In the Bible there are references made to the characteristics of animals as found in man. Jesus called Herod 'that fox', because of his sly and cunning ways (Luke 13:32). In Heaven and Hell there is a correspondence made between animals and man's traits:

> The living creatures of the earth, in general, correspond to affections, gentle and useful creatures to good affections, fierce and useless ones to evil affections...Man, too, is similar to animals as to his natural man. Therefore, he is compared to them in common speech. For example, if he is gentle he is called a sheep or a lamb, if fierce, a bear or wolf, if cunning, a fox or a serpent, and so on.[7]

Plates 9-10 The Little Black Boy

In this poem the mother directs the boy to 'Look on the rising sun: there God does live'. Swedenborg speaks of God in the terms of a Sun, of love and heat, and of wisdom and light. In the reference to a 'white cloud', is Blake recalling the passage from Divine Love and Wisdom in which the white cloud refers to the presence of God amongst the ancient peoples? The account is extracted from Continuation of the Last Judgment paragraph 74, in which Swedenborg speaks of those who 'form an Idea of God as existing in the midst of a cloud'. Blake marked the passage, showing his awareness of the fable. He also included a comment in the Descriptive Catalogue, 'A Spirit and a Vision are not, as modern philosophy supposes,a clouded vapour, or a nothing...Spirits are organized men' (K576-77).

The black boy shelters the white boy from the heat, because the white boy cannot bear it. Does this reflect Swedenborg's mention of the

celestial genius of the African race? In Heaven and Hell it is stated:

> Among the gentiles in heaven the Africans are most beloved, for they receive the goods and truths of heaven more readily than others [8]

And in the Continuation of the Last Judgment, paragraph 73, it is stated that 'The Africans are more interior than other gentiles'.

In the Theosophical Society the subject was touched upon, and Nordenskjöld and Walström sought to establish a New Church community in Africa (Plan for a Free Community upon the Western Coast of Africa 1789). Blake was also aware of the way in which black people were treated, and this came out strongly some ten years later when he was preparing illustrations for Stedman's work on slavery. Both black and white are under the loving care of God, for both are summoned to the 'golden tent'. Swedenborg declared that all were saved by their loyalty and obedience to their faith, no matter what that faith might be.

> There is a general opinion that those born outside the Church, who are called heathen, or gentiles, cannot be saved...these also are saved (for) the mercy of the Lord is universal...Therefore He (the Lord) has provided a religion for everyone...to live in accordance with one's religious belief is to live interiorly. [9]

The black boy is fortunate in this, that while on earth he may have suffered and been mistreated yet he is able to show charity, concern for his neighbour, whose abuse he had to bear; thus, the black boy's joy is the greater. The white boy must wait until such time as he can partake of the joys of heaven.

Foster Damon was of the opinion that Blake did not accept the equality of the races, as judged by the final stanza. But surely the stanza shows the equality before God in heaven, despite the appearance to the contrary here on earth. Bearing in mind Blake's own attitude to those in power - 'the dark satanic mills' - it would seem natural for

him to judge the black boy equal to the white. Such would only go to strengthen his own feeling of repulsion against slavery.

The final line of the poem would suggest the white boy will eventually accept the black boy and come to love him as a brother, when both 'lean in joy upon our father's knee'. In heaven the character of the person, not the colour of his skin on earth, is all important.

The odd one out, the one who is different from the rest, is usually termed the 'black sheep'. The phrase was established by 1792. Would Blake ever see himself as a black sheep, one who was at odds with the rest? He certainly did not follow the family trade, but desired to be an artist. In the poem 'The Little Black Boy' the thought of the black sheep might well have been at the forefront of Blake's mind. He shows in this poem that even the negative has a use to perform, a theme he was later to take up in the matter of 'contraries' in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell. No doubt the protest against the slave trade, which was taken up by many at the time with a social conscience, could be the basis of the poem. The desire for a common humanity without racial prejudice was a hope in 1789, with the abolition in 1810 of the British trade in slaves. The black and white stand as common humanity before God, if only men have eyes to see it. The colour of the skin does not colour the state of the soul. When the cloud, obscuring God, is removed the black boy who has borne the heat of the sun will more easily bear the glory of God, and in so doing, will be able to shield the white boy from the heat, until he is accustomed to the radiance of the Divine Glory. Ironically, the cloud obscures God, and in itself is an expression of whiteness. To Blake's eyes, the white folk did not possess all things of religion by the fact of their colour.

Swedenborg's Spiritual Diary was brought to London in 1787 by

Wadstrom. He wished the whole work to be translated and published in English. He prepared selected passages for publication as an Appendix to the 1790 issue of the New Jerusalem Magazine . It was in this publication that he set out his ideas about a trip to Africa for the purpose of establishing a New Church Community. Among other tracts, which the Swedish travellers lodged with the Theosophical Society in London, was The Last Judgment (Posthumous). It was not available in translation, but those who read it in Latin would no doubt share with others the idea and thoughts found there. On the matter of the Africans it states:

> There are those, among the blackest of the Africans...who come into heaven saying...that they detest blackness because they know that their souls are white and their bodies black (nam sciunt quod animae eorum candidae sint, corpora autum nigra).[10]

The sentiments found in the last line harmonise almost identically with the line 'And I am black, but O!my soul is white'.

Plate 11 The Blossom

It is generally accepted that this poem is a poetic expression of 'the consummation of love by the act of generation'. Blake did some engravings in 1791 for Erasmus Darwin's Botanic Garden[11]. This author described the sexual parts of the flower allegorically in terms of human beings. Blake may have decided to use the same plant-like image in his poem. 'The Sick Rose', which Blake was to include in Songs of Experience holds a similar theme and connotation. As Blake had in mind poems which 'every child may joy to hear', the indelicate words on the child's ear are converted by allegory into a delicacy both of design and form of word composition.

Plate 12 The Chimney Sweeper

'The Chimney Sweeper' is a piece of social propaganda, and can be read at several levels. It expresses the real London, at the time of Blake, when poverty abounded and children could be sold into a form of slavery. The social indignation is seen by those who desired to bring in a law to prevent children becoming sweeps. As the opening stanza shows such was the work for the unfortunate orphan. They worked for slave wages. They were as oppressed as the Africans or other enslaved race. The children suffered drudgery silently, and their only hope was the Angel of Death. They were often so small, they could hardly shout out 'sweep'. Here is the sense of rejection. The 'soot' is the earthy mire - the devil's gold. Their very bodies were as 'coffins'. Yet their plaintive cry was 'weep, weep, weep, weep'. .

Climbing the warren of chimneys in the homes of the landed gentry, was like living in hell, blackness on all sides and no escape. A picture of the innocent in hell, and the cold words of comfort - 'if he'd be a good boy, He'd have God for his father & never want for joy.' Swedenborg gives an account of chimney sweeps in Earths in the Universe, a book we know Blake read; though his copy of the work is not extant, he cites it in a note in his reading of Heaven and Hell.

> There are also Spirits amongst those from the Earth Jupiter, whom they call Sweepers of Chimnies, because they appear in like Garments, and likewise with sooty Faces...One of these Spirits came to me, and anxiously requested that I could intercede for him to be admitted into Heaven; he said, that he was not conscious of having done any Evil. He was likewise of a black Colour in the Light of Heaven, but he himself said that he was not of a black Colour, but of a darkish brown.[12]

Blake's figures of Tom, Dick, Joe, Ned, and Jack may suggest real boys who were sweeps or be just names; Swedenborg's comment is not related to social environment, but rather to a visual expression. All sweeps have

black faces, and they have dirty garments through the job they do. The Angel calls them to strip off their foul garments and 'wash in the stream',thus rising free 'naked and white', all their bags left behind. The above Swedenborgian passage continues, recounting the preparation for Heaven, that they

> are stripped of their own Garments, and are clothed with new shining Raiments, and become Angels.

The images in this poem hold strong Swedenborgian connotations, which Blake was ready to use as his social conscience sought to free the innocent from their hellish nightmare.

This poem appeared in letterpress during Blake's lifetime,being printed in The Chimney Sweeper's Friend (1824 and 1825).

Plates 13 and 14 The Little Boy Lost and The Little Boy Found

In the two poems 'The Little Boy Lost' and 'The Little Boy Found' and their designs, Blake turns myth into vision. In part these poems were inspired by Mary Wollstonecraft's own Original Stories from Real Life, for which Blake designed and engraved the plates. Mary Wollstonecraft had translated some stories from the German and such a story related to a little boy who was lost. When night fell the boy saw phantom shapes. Remembering his father's advice he prayed and help came to him. In Blake's version the little boy lost and found is in narrative form. The man who saved the boy was God himself. Here is reinforced the Swedenborgian doctrine of God being known in a human form. In Heaven and Hell, paragraph 86 states: 'God...is the Divine in a human form'. If the boy thinks of God as a 'cloudy vapour' then he will lose him in the dark of the night.

> The night was dark, no father was there
> The child was wet with dew,
> The mire was deep, & the child did weep
> And away the vapour flew.

These poems are symbolic in tone and must be so understood. The deep mire may express materialism, for when man loses his way, vision is lost. It is the divine influx which keeps all things of creation in being, for 'the finite cannot exist excepting from the Infinite'[13]. Nature lives not from itself, but is the reflected life from the spiritual sun of heaven. 'A man is an organ of life, and God alone is life: God infuses his life into the organ and all its parts...And God grants man a sense that the life in himself is as if it were his own'.[14] Almost identical words are used by Blake in The Four Zoas:

> ...thou art but a form & organ of life, & of thyself
> And nothing, being Created Continually by Mercy and
> Love divine.[15]

In 'The Little Boy Found', the father is identified as God, and the deep mire as mother. For the incorporeal states of vapour, mire and clay become transformed into realities of life and spirit. Eve is 'the mother of all living' according to Genesis 3:20. The father is the Divine Humanity of the Lord, so the orphan gains spiritual parents.

Plate 15 The Laughing Song

When Blake visited the social gatherings at the home of Harriet Matthew, he would often 'sing his songs'. It appears that Blake delighted in singing his verses that is, he would compose tunes to accompany the poems. In the 'Laughing Song' the repeated phrase, 'Ha, Ha, He' calls for a simple but merry tune. The rural setting is suggested in the poem, and in it there are no lambs but grasshoppers and birds, the woolly creatures would not be out of place in such surroundings. The birds that laugh are not dissimilar from the birds that welcome 'Spring' as well as those who sing in 'The Ecchoing Green'. There is the picture of youth and innocence, and the sense of joy.

Plate 16-17 A Cradle Song

As the illustration to this poem shows there is the attention of the mother to her child, as she sings the lullaby. Sweet dreams echo sweet sleep; there is the sense of rest and peace in sweet innocence. There is the protection by the mother for the little child. In the Notebook (p.114) there is an 'experience' version of 'A Cradle Song', which may possibly have been written for Songs of Experience, but was not included in the final version.

But sleep can also be the 'sleep of death', a sleep that brings forth weeping. The transference of the final stanzas to the child Jesus makes more poignant the arrangements of the child's pillow in the illustration, which takes up most of the page, and is suggestive of an halo, which is a symbol of divinity.

The weeping in the penultimate stanza could reflect the story in Luke 7:32, when the children find no response from others in the games they are playing:

> we have piped unto you and ye have not danced;
> we have mourned to you, and yet ye have not wept.

The Angel hovering over the child, in the second stanza, could be reflecting the comments of Swedenborg in Heaven and Hell, that angel mothers care for little children who die in childhood. There are thoughts of caring, an image clear in Blake's mind, since many of the children in Songs of Innocence are children in need of care and love.

Blake marked passages in Heaven and Hell in the section relating to children in heaven. Paragraph No. 334 speaks of little children in heaven being taught by nurses, later to be 'transferred to another heaven, where they are taught by masters; and so on'. In Paragraph 332 there is reference to mother angels:

As soon as little children are resuscitated, which takes place immediately after death, they are taken into heaven, and confided to angel women who, in the life of their body, tenderly loved little children and at the same time loved God. Because these during their life in the world loved all children with a kind of motherly tenderness, they receive them as their own; while the children, from an implanted disposition, love them as their own mother. There are as many children in each one's care, as she desires from a spiritual parental affection.

Plate 18 The Divine Image

In this poem Blake shows clearly that all religions are one. The impulse to pray is common to all mankind; and the Being addressed in prayer is seen reflected in the qualities they love in their fellow human being. Such qualities cannot be worshipped in the abstract, but all are aware of them through their dealings of man to man. Mercy is seen in the action of human kindness, pity is the sympathy in the face of a friend, love is the expression of tenderness of others, and peace marks all human relationships. So in distress man prays; here is the inner spiritual being of man in action. For the human form, is the Divine form; it is the Divine Humanity that must be recognised in the lives of others. If man were not in this image, he would not possess the qualities he recognises in God. Man and God are inseparable in the mind of Blake.

'The Divine Image' does not attempt to explain virtues but simply to name them. The man at prayer prays in his distress knowing that God is listening. There is no dogmatism to be found in this poem, for it is as much a stopping short as an assertion. Mercy, like the heart, is hidden from view; pity like the face expresses the disposition within; peace, like a garment, is assumed and is public and conventional; love is the expression of relationship of one person to

another. The whole being of man, the man at prayer, is responsive to the movement of the heart, body, countenance and all attaching to it, as a mode of the divine image. Man was made in the 'image and likeness of God'. All religions are one, as all men are one in the Divine Image. This sense of unity is found in the common bond of mankind. So Blake cuts through theology and ritual, right obedience and behaviour, to see human beings as centres of religious awareness. God is in them, and they are in God. This is confirmed in the comment by Blake to Crabb Robinson, that 'I am God. God is in me and you'.

As Kathleen Raine observes, 'The Divine Image' reflects the Swedenborgian concept of the Divine Humanity. In Arcana Caelestia there is the repeated phrase, 'mercy, peace, and every good', when Swedenborg is discussing the spiritual sense of the 'face of Jehovah'.[16] This is found in the first volume of the work, which was available in translation and could have been read by Blake. No copy of the work, bearing association with Blake, is extant. Bronowski is of the opinion that the poem could have been inspired by John Wesley's hymn:

> 'Tis mercy all, that thou hast brought
> My mind to see her peace in thee.[17]

Tulk's comment, in an article by Spilling in the New Church Magazine May 1887, on 'Blake the Visionary', refers to the point that the poem was written in Hatton Garden Chapel. The generally accepted dating of the poem is 1788-9, when the chapel had not been built. But it is possible that Blake sketched out the poem when attending the First General Conference at the East Cheap Chapel in 1789. If we accept, what is reasonable to suppose, that Blake was searching for new patrons at the Conference from among the New Church community, then it would not be out of place for Blake to show a sketch outline of what he had written. Certainly copies of this poem, and 'On another's sorrow', were in the

hands of the Tulk family, for C.A. Tulk reproduced them on more than one occasion in his own publications.

The Tulk family gave financial support to the Blakes. C.A. Tulk's daughter claims that 'William Blake, the Poet and Painter, with his wife, were rescued from destitution by Mr. C.A. Tulk.'[18] Tulk also lent a copy of Songs to Coleridge, who expressed his comments on the work. Further he took Coleridge to see Blake's 'Last Judgment' to which the 'author of Christabel poured forth concerning it a flood of eloquent commentary and enlargement'.[19]

If the plates of 'The Divine Image' and 'On Another's Sorrow', or the first proofs, were in the hands of C.A. Tulk, for him to use freely in his publications, does it not sugget that his father may well have bought plates, or proofs from Blake? There is some suggestion that the poem is not found in all copies of Songs, as issued.[20]

Plate 19 Holy Thursday

Here is a poem which marks the annual ritual of the children from the various Charity Schools in London walking in line to St. Paul's. Blake acts as an eye witness and commentator on the event. The beadles would be there to keep order as the children exhibited their piety and gratitude to their patrons. The children would sing to their assembled patrons, as well as hear the sermon exalting the generousity of the patrons. Blake senses the poverty there was around, and the lack of true charity. The children with 'innocent faces clean', raise to heaven their voices in thankfulness, and as though the angels responded, Blake reminds their guardians to take care lest they 'drive an angel' from their doors.

The poem expresses Blake's own sense of injustice and failure of the true social sense of compassion. The children are not bubbling

over with joy, but are lifeless, since all joy and laughter has been driven away, in the attitude of solemnity best suited to the guardians. Blake sees the children as lambs to the slaughter, and all this done in the name of christian charity. Blake would be aware of the case of children in heaven, and the care taken of them by angel mothers, especially of those who died in childhood. He himself marked such passages in his copy of Heaven and Hell.[21] In this work Swedenborg notes that 'a life of piety separate from a life of charity is difficult; and to the extent that such a life is believed to lead towards heaven, so it leads away from heaven'.[22] He defines charity in this same passages as 'a life of charity consists in acting honestly and justly in every employment, in every business, and in every work, from an interior, that is, from a heavenly motive'.

Plates 20-21 Night

The poem is symbolic of the ending of the day when a new world opens up. There is the silence and all are asleep, but by the light of the moon another world comes into being - 'when wolves and tygers howl for prey'. Psychologically there are two sides to man, the light and dark, and good and evil. In the shadow of night the evil intentions can parade, ready to pounce on unsuspecting innocence, like 'bleating lambs'.

In the animal world instincts are followed, the birds fly and sing, the wolves and tygers seek to hunt and kill, and the lamb has a right to die and inherit a new world. The eternal day comes with death, and it is not for the guardian angels to prevent what will be, the choice is not theirs but man's own. The lambs are unconscious of their surroundings as they nibble the grass, the wolves and tygers are well aware of what is around them as they seek their prey, destined to

eat the lamb; this is the circle of life. The angels must 'pitying stand and weep' for in creation food is supplied to all.

In this poem there is the reality and the dream. Blake may have had in his mind those passages from Isaiah called the 'Servant Songs'. In Isaiah 53 there is the symbolic image of the lamb going to the slaughter, without a cry: Christians see this as expressed in Christ's own death on the cross. And there is the passage which speaks of the golden age when innocence will be aboard and destruction will be no more:

> The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice den.[23]

Plates 22-23 Spring

Here is a poem which echoes the feeling in all hearts when Spring is here. All of creation responds to the new awakening, the new year. It is a poem of contrast - the winter, spring, the happiness, sorrow. There is an awakening as the dark silence of night recedes, and winter gives way to spring. The birds themselves are a contrast, a nightingale and a lark, a bird of the bush and a bird of the air, the bird of the night and the bird of the day; both birds involved in Spring; that first delight in the new awakening. Just as nature welcomes the spring so does mankind, for there is the presence of the boy and the girl; the crowing cock calls all to awake, as 'Merry voice , infant noise' rejoice and welcome the New Year. And the lamb, which is in itself a symbol of Spring, welcomes the year as does Blake himself, the 'I' in the first stanza. And the action of the lamb licking the face of Blake, this sensual enjoyment is symbolic of the

season, when as Tennyson said, 'a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love'.

The developing action of bird, child, and lamb and poet reflects the introduction to Songs of Innocence, when the Piper plays his tune and the sound of the flute is heard.

Spring is also a time of resurrection, the restoration and the new awakening: Christ is the harbinger of newness and regeneration. As was noted earlier, 'Spring' has a spiritual significance, of innocence of infancy, as well as the wonder of heavenly youth, as Blake will have noted in his reading of Heaven and Hell.

> Those who are in heaven are continually advancing towards the spring time of life, with a greater advance towards a more joyful and happy spring the more thousands of years they live; and this to eternity...In a word to grow old in heaven is to grow young.[24]

Plate 24 Nurse's Song

In the illustration to this song the nurse can be seen keeping a watchful and caring eye on the children as they play. The child must be protected, but so must symbolic innocence which children express. There is the feeling that little children will request a little more; 'for it is yet day / And we cannot go to sleep'. Every moment must be grasped 'till the light fades away', then it is time for home and bed and sleep. There is the clinging to innocence before the onset of experience. Old John in 'The Echoing Green' was anxious to hold on to youth, to innocence, and did not want the sun to descend for then the sport must end and with it youthfulness.

Blake is afraid that so much is lost when innocence disappears. It is part of the necessary cycle of life, for innocence must give way to experience; but there is the heartfelt desire for innocence to return again. Here in the 'Nurse's Song' there is the feeling of

protection, even as the onlooker and observer; but one must grow up and with it innocence must give way to experience. The following passage from Heaven and Hell has bearing on this movement:

> Man has been so created that during childhood he is in innocence, though external, and when he becomes old he is in internal innocence, to this end that he may come by the former into the latter, and from the latter return to the former. For the same reason, when a man becomes old he dwindles in body and becomes like a little child, but like a wise child, that is, an angel...This is why, in the Word, "a little child" signifies one who is innocent, and "an old man" signifies one who is wise in whom is innocence.[25]

Plate 25 Infant Joy

C.A. Tulk received a personal copy of Songs of Innocence and of Experience from Blake, and he was always anxious that his friends should make the acquaintance of the poet, if not in person at least through his work. Tulk sent a copy of Songs to S.T. Coleridge. In reply, Coleridge expressed his pleasure in reading the Songs though he objected to a line in this poem, 'Infant Joy': 'Thou dost smile'. A babe of two days old cannot smile, nor is he able to do so, was the comment of Coleridge.[26] He felt that 'innocence and Nature must go together, Infancy is too holy a thing to be ornamented'. Blake would agree with Coleridge that infancy is a holy thing, but he did not set out to represent nature, but the pure state of innocence. That is why Blake can have the babe talking in the first stanza. The babe protects what can be; the angelic form is potential in the babe, as Swedenborg expressed it in Heaven and Hell, in a section Blake himself marked concerning little children in heaven:

> The state of little chidren in the other life far surpasses their state in the world, for they are not clothed with an earthly body, but with one like than of an angel...little children in this world must be taught to walk, to make gestures and to speak; even their senses, as seeing, hearing, must be opened by use. It is different with children in the other life. As they are

> spirits, they act at once in accordance with their interiors, walking without practice, and also talking, though at first from general affections not yet distinguished into ideas of thought.[27]

Plate 26 A Dream

The poem is a simple fable. The narrator is secure with an 'Angel-guarded bed', so he may dream safely. He dreams of an ant that is lost in the grass. The ant is anxious for her children. Conscious of her plight, and about to bewail her fate with tears, she sees 'the watchman of the night', in the form of a glow worm. He undertakes, along with a beetle, to guide her home.

The poem reflects Blake's own feeling about God's Providence. God cares for his creation, even the minutest part of it. Mankind is the crown of that creation, so God will be no less concerned for man than he is for the little ant. This theme is found in the Gospels: 'the hairs of your head are numbered'.[28] Nothing is insignificant in the eyes of God. 'Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground without your Father's will.[29] 'Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them'.[30]

Blake had his own ideas about Divine Providence, and he was prepared to challenge Swedenborg's Divine Providence with his marginal comments, when the thoughts expressed did not agree with his own sentiments.

Plate 27 On Another's Sorrow

To share sorrow with another is to halve the grief and the subsequent burden; sympathy and empathy are the hallmarks of humanity and fellowship, for they demonstrate care and compassion, love and understanding. As Blake saw it:

Can I see anothers woe,
And not be in sorrow too.

But the degrees to which there can be the sharing Blake marks by the reaction of the parties involved, the father and the mother of the child.

Can I see anothers grief,
And not seek for kind relief.

The answer must be 'no', because of the limitation of human beings. The father may weep with the child, but it is the mother who not only weeps but can also protect the child.

There is a response to be made but whether it will be supportive is another matter. Here is the difference between empathy and sympathy.

The compassion of the Divine Father's help is seen in the seventh stanza. Christ comes to be one with man; he is a 'man of sorrows', as the prophet Isaiah expresses it, and 'acquainted with grief'. Blake shows that the Divine compassion is never blind to man's plight. The Divine is prepared to 'sit by us and moan', for did he not send 'his only begotten Son into the world', for man's salvation? In Matthew the extent of Divine compassion is seen in his care for the smallest things of creation, for there is nothing outside his purview. 'Behold the fowls of the air; they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they'?[31] God is not afar off - transcendent - he is near - **immanent** - for Blake. And in the nearness he involves himself in that which is good - the concern and care of those in need. If man finds it difficult to be one with another's sorrow, the same cannot be said of God.

b) The Songs of Experience

The Songs of Innocence and The Songs of Experience were engraved at different periods. The title page of Innocence gives a date of 1789, whether it is the date when the etching began, or when the set was completed, is not easy to assert. The Songs of Experience was bound with The Songs of Innocence and a date given on the title page of this joint work is 1794. The prospectus announcing the work is dated 10th October, 1793, and states that it is 'published and on sale'. One completed set could have been ready: Blake generally did his work to order. Blake was not averse to changing plates within a set, so again, there must be conjecture about the absolute date of publication.

It is accepted that the two series were engraved at different times, and the draft of some poems can be found in the Notebook. Even with a lapse in the completion of the two sets, they are conceived as one work.

The Songs of Experience cover the period of man's life when he develops from the joyful state of innocence to the bitter disillusion of sordid reality as presented by moral convention. As Raymond Lister expressed it:

> The happy child becomes a jaded adult; the joyful bride becomes the hard-worked housewife;[1] the idealistic youth becomes a man of the world.

Blake captures his own feelings in these poems. Though a successful journeyman, his engraved imaginative work received little recognition in his life time. This caused him to become more aware of the life around him - poverty, injustice, oppression - and Blake sought to expose these evils in his work.

During the interval between the etching of the two books Blake

was at work on Tiriel. If Songs are a statement of the contrast between innocence and experience, Tiriel enables us to understand the background experience in Blake's mind. In The Songs of Innocence the mother in relation to the child was important. The mother was a great source of comfort and protection. In Tiriel Myratana is a queen, but also a mother, and she is dying. Thus she will not be able to offer protection to her children. But the children themselves are also changing. The child may be innocent,but he represents a selfishness he may not be aware of, as well as the release of instinctive inhibitions. The mother's love affords that sense of freedom for the child as long as possible. But when the child thinks, reasons, identifies himself as a separate individual from others, then the mother can no longer be protective. The child has moved from innocence into experience. In Tiriel the children are young adults, whereas in The Songs of Innocence they are young, occasionally infants. The growing child enters the state of experience with the onset of independence. In Tiriel the children rebel against their father, the king, in order to achieve wisdom. Innocence must lead to experience of life if it is to find fulfilment. The Piper of Innocence whose 'songs that all may joy to hear" cannot sing the experience ; that must be left to the Bard, 'who Present, Past & Future sees", as he calls to the "lapsed soul'.

If for Blake the Songs are a contrasting state of the human soul., for Swedenborg matters are black and white, the contrast between the angelic and the diabolic. If Blake breaks from the Swedenborgian mould, he nonetheless is drawn to Swedenborgian ideas, as the stuff on which to work his own inspiration. He had read in detail Divine Love and Wisdom, as his notes reveal, and marks paragraph 49. This is within a section in which paragraph 47 reads, in part:

> Love consists in this, and what it hath may be another's, and that it may feel his Delight as Delight in itself; this is to Love; but for a Man to feel his own Delight in another, and the other's Delight in himself, is not to love...These two Kinds of Love are diametrically opposite to each other.

This self same contrast of love and delight, given and received, is found in 'The Clod & the Pebble':

> Love seeketh not Itself to please,
> Nor for itself hath any care;
> But for another gives its ease,
> And builds a Heaven in Hells despair.
>
> So sang the little Clod of Clay,
> Trodden with the cattle's feet;
> But a Pebble of the brook
> Warbled out these metres meet:
>
> Love seeketh only Self to please,
> To bind another to Its delight:
> Joys in anothers lose of ease,
> And builds a Hell in Heavens despite.

The words and ideas are strictly Swedenborgian in context. The hard stone pebble expresses the biblical concept of hardness of heart.

> And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will make the stony heart out of their flesh, and I will give them an heart of flesh.[2]
>
> 'Pharoah's heart (is) hardened'[3]
>
> 'grieves for the hardness of heart'[4]

The image of the Clod of Clay Blake picks up in Thel 4.

The contrast between a religion of love and freedom, and a religion of law and restraint, Blake takes up in 'The Garden of Love'. The symbolic landscape is in the form of Swedenborgian correspondences. The garden of love bears sweet flowers, the garden of cold faith, thorns and briars. This is reinforced by 'Priests in black gowns', as reflecting the clergy of faith alone, the 'Dealers in Mysteries'. There is a Memorable Relation in True Christian Religion which reflects much that is found in this poem. Blake was later to turn to this same work

for his inspiration of 'The spiritual Preceptor', which he described in the Descriptive Catalogue as being based on True Christian Religion No. 623. Relevant to this poem is the Memorable Relation in True Christian Religion, No. 385, which reads in part:

> Faith separate from Charity deadens all Things, and Faith joined with Charity enlovens all Things. The nature of such Deadening, and enlivening, may be seen visibly in our spiritual World...for where Faith is joined with Charity, there are paradisiacal Gardens, flowry Walks, and verdant Groves....but where Faith is separate from Charity, there doth not grow as much as a blade of Grass, nor any green Thing, except it be on Thorns and Briers...At that moment there were standing not far away certain of the Clergy, whom the Angel called Justifiers and Sanctifiers of Men by Faith alone, and also Arcanists, that is, Dealers in Mysteries. We repeated to them this account of Faith and Charity...they turned away and said 'We did not hear you'..."We do not wish to hear".

Blake read over the door to the Chapel in East Cheap, which he attended with his wife for the First General Conference of the New Church, the words 'Nunc Licet': 'Now it is permitted' to enter with the intellect into the mysteries of faith. 'The Garden of Love' Chapel had over its doors, 'Thou shalt not'. Here is the negative viewpoint that Blake sees in organised religion. He would have heard in Conference the Established Church being called the 'Old Church', or the 'Dead Church', in contrast to the New Church. The 'graves' in the garden could mirror this thought of death.

Introduction

The Holy Word speaks to the Bard, as in the 'Introduction' to Innocence it was the child on the cloud who spoke to the Piper. The Bard possesses wisdom and experience; he is 'Present, Past & Future'. Aware of their plight he calls lapsed souls, for their state of innocence was lost. In

the story of creation Adam and Eve lost their innocence through eating of the forbidden fruit. The Lord God walked through the garden in the cool of the day, and punishment was meted out to the hopeless pair, and they were driven from the garden.

Unlike the creator, the Bard (as Ancient Wisdom) offers succour to the lapsed souls. Fallen man accepts that the world can be regained. All begin out of innocence, but by means of the selfhood man moves to experience, with the establishment of law and punishment. But with the Bard wisdom can be won, for there is no eternal punishment, but another day to dawn. The 'starry floor' of Reason and the "water shore' of materialism, that realm of time and space, are only temporal things. Earth (fallen man) can rise from the 'slumberous mass' to regain his innocence.

Blake determined for himself that hell was not eternal, nor was the subsequent punishment eternal either. Unlike Calvin he could not accept predestination (and on this point he crossed swords with Swedenborg as his comments in Divine Providence show clearly). He had difficulty in accepting Jehovah as God, because of the enforced laws and punishments which fill the pages of the Old Testament. The God of love, as expressed by Jesus in the New Testament, was more Blake's idea of what God should be like. Hence his attraction to the New Church concept of the Divine Humanity.

Plate 31 Earth's Answer

Earth expresses for Blake 'Fallen Man'. Man hears the admonition of the Holy Word, but hardly hears the voice of the Bard. Earth is the prisoner of reason and the jealous creaton of the material world. Blake's image of the God of the Old Testament, Jehovah, is that of a selfish, cruel and hypocritical being in his concern for his

children. The heavy chains that bind man, through the rule of the establishment, must be broken if holy innocence is to be restored. Man fears his creator, so he must seek free love in secret which of itself can never produce 'the virgins of youth' or joys in the morning. Blake uses words found in this poem again in the 'Vision of the Daughters of Albion' (Plate 7, K194).

The symbols of this poem could also express the challenge of youth to parental authority. If experience of life is not gained by man, there can be no hope of his regaining the innocence of wisdom.

From his reading of Swedenborg's Heaven and Hell Blake was aware of the importance of the innocence of wisdom as the final state for mankind, and Blake sought to capture this ideal in his Songs.

> Man has been so created that during his childhood he is in innocence, though external, and when he becomes old he is in internal innocence, to the end that he may come by the former into the latter, and from the latter return to the former. For the same reason, when a man becomes old he dwindles in body and becomes again like a little child, but like a wise child, that is, an [5]angel, for an angel is a wise child in an eminent sense.

Man's return to the innocence of wisdom was Blake's vision also, for he saw experience leading on to the regaining of innocence that was lost in childhood.

Plate 32 The Clod and the Pebble

Here is a contrast between the soft and pliable, and the hard and solid; it is symbolic of both innocence and experience, heaven and hell, the selfless and the selfish. The clod sings of unselfish love and so the state of innocence. The pebble, in the water of materialism, sings the song of selfish love and builds a hell in spite of heaven.

Love seeketh not Itself to please,
Nor for itself hath any care;
But for another gives its ease,
And builds a Heaven in Hells despair.

So sang the little Clod of Clay....

These words strongly reflect a passage in Swedenborg's Divine Love and Wisdom, which Blake read , marking sections that interested him. In one such section, paragraph 47, the attitude of the Clod reflects true love:

> Love consists in this, that one's own should be another's; and feeling the delight of that other as a delight in one's self, this is loving.

The attitude of the Pebble reflects the opposite to that of the Clod of Clay, and becomes the expression of selfish love.

But a Pebble of the brook
Warbled out these metres meet:

Love seeketh only Self to please,
To bind another to Its delight:
Joys in another's lose of ease,
And builds a Hell in Heavens despite.

The passage from Divine Love and Wisdom continues and reflects the statement of the Pebble:

> but feeling one's own delight in another, and not that other's delight in one's self, that is not loving; for this is loving one's self, but the former is loving the neighbour. These two kinds of love are diametrically opposed to one another.

Plate 33 Holy Thursday

This poem, like its counterpart in Innocence, is based on real life. There is a report in The Times for June 6th 1788 which speaks of some six thousand uniformed children from charity schools in the metropolis marching to St. Paul's to hear a sermon and sing before their patrons. There is a similar report for the 24th April 1789, when a special thanksgiving service was held to mark the King's recovery.

Blake, as the Bard, questions whether it is a 'holy thing' to parade the children so. In a rich and fruitful land must babes be reduced to such misery and humiliation? The hand that feeds the starving is the very hand that steals from the poor and starving and reduces them to such degradation. Can slavery and misery ever be expressions of holiness, even when set in the magnificence of St. Paul's?

Impoverished though the children are,there is a better life for them with God. The hand that purports to help cannot deny them their eternal peace. Where the sun shines and the rain falls food is in abundance, and charity handouts have no meaning.

> For where-e'er the sun doth shine,
> And where-e'er the rain does fall:
> Babe can never hunger there,
> Nor poverty the mind appall.

As well as speaking of the denial of the riches of the land, Blake is hinting at the lack of spiritual riches also. Those hearing the children may themselves be in spiritual poverty, despite their material wealth.

Blake had a great feeling of concern for children, as is reflected in the Songs, and he marked several passages in Swedenborg's Heaven and Hell again high-lighting his thoughts on the matter:

> The poor come into heaven not on account of their poverty but because of their life. Everyone's life follows him, whether he is rich or poor. There is no peculiar mercy for one in preference to another.[6]
>
> A life of charity towards the neighbour...is doing what is just and right in every work and in every employment...not a life of piety apart from charity.[7]

Plates 35 & 36 The Little Girl Lost and Found

The protection of the little girl, who is lost, by the animals could reflect the assurance of Swedenborg concerning children in

heaven. Certainly Blake marked passages in Heaven and Hell relating to little children in heaven. Would the act of finding the child by the parents, hence the child is safe, be a sign of hope for parents who are grieving over their lost or dying child? Certainly Swedenborg can give assurance in this direction: his was a message of hope as against the Roman Catholic doctrine at the time that the unbaptised child was lodged in limbo, following death in childhood.

The marked passages in Heaven and Hell concerning children in heaven shows the interest Blake had in this matter:

> Little children are resuscitated, which takes places immediately after death, they are taken into heaven and confided to angel women who, in the life of their body, tenderly loved little children.[8]

> Little children who die are just as much little children in the other life, having a like infantile mind, a like innocence of ignorance, and a like tenderness in all things.[9]

> Many suppose that in heaven little children remain little children, and continue as such among the angels...But the fact is entirely otherwise. It is intelligence and wisdom that make an angel, and as long as little children do not possess these they are not angels, although they are with angels; but as soon as they become intelligent and wise they become angels.[10]

Plate 37 The Little Chimney Sweeper

Blake tells, in this contrasting poem on the same subject in Songs of Innocence and now Experience, of the expulsion of the child by the parents. They do not feel they wrong him in any way, for there are times when the boy is happy and so they are able to go to church and pray, for the Church does not condemn a society that is able to inflict cruelty on the innocence. Here the parents could be reflecting the attitude of the Church, which neglects the social evils for its own piety and acts of charity. This theme Blake uses many times, for example, in 'The Little Vagabond', in which the child finds warmth in the alehouse, and coldness

in the Church. And the marching orphan children, again in Blake's eyes, showed hypocrisy in a misunderstanding of true charity. In Swedenborg's works Blake would be aware of the true meaning of charity.

> A life of charity towards the neighbour is doing what is just and right in every work and employment...and not a life of piety apart from charity.[11]

> The poor come into heaven not on account of their poverty, but because of their life. Everyone's life follows him, whether he be rich or poor. There is no peculiar mercy for one in preference to another; he who has lived well is received, while he who has not lived well is rejected. Moreover, poverty leads and draws man away from heaven just as much as wealth does.[12]

> Charity is everything that pertains to life.[13]

Plate 38 Nurse's Song

In contrast to the 'Nurse's Song' in Innocence, this poem relates the feelings of the nurse, not for the children, but for herself. She has lost the children, for they are all grown up, which symbolises her own lost youth. Her spring is wasted away, and she is now conscious of her own unfulfilment.

Spring is the symbol of joy and hope, it expresses the feelings of innocence. But for the nurse the past is gone, wasted, and all that remains is winter. The nurse neither in herself enjoyed the spring of innocence for her 'face turns green and pale', expressing her jealousy now, for even with experience he has not achieved what might have been. Even when the children grow up their memories are no consolation, but rather reminders of what she has missed.

> Your spring & your day are wasted in play
> And your winter and night in disguise

Spring is the symbol of hope, even when the cold, dark winter is over there is the awakening of spring time. But the nurse fails to see this. The sex starved spinster must find cover in 'disguise'. As Swedenborg expresses it in Heaven and Hell, when speaking of the four seasons,

'night and winter' are the ideas of the states that 'exists in hell'. There is much bitterness in this poem on the part of the nurse. Maybe Blake had met those who regretted life passing them by, and could find no comfort in their old age and contentment in their memories.

Plate 39 The Sick Rose

The worm could be an expression of the snake, which is the symbol of deception. The worm discovers the secret of the rose and then seeks to destroy its life. The symbol of a red rose could be the expression of corporeal love, the love of the flesh, which causes pain. For the worm enters the heart of the rose and brings not the spirit of joy but pain. The 'howling storm' in which the worm comes is a symbol of materialism.On the matter of the sensual, Swedenborg makes this comment in Heaven and Hell:

> Sensual man can reason, some of them more cunningly and keenly than anyone else; but they reason from the fallacies of the senses confirmed by their knowledges; and because they are able to reason in this way, they believe themselves to be wiser than others.[14]

The worm is certainly cunning and deceitful and in action brings no joy but destruction.

Plate 40 The Fly

Blake has the ability in his poetry to bring the animal or the insect he mentions to life. In this poem the flickering line imitates the flight of the insect, driven here and there. Blake is reflecting on life and ambition. There is life and death, joy and sadness, innocence and its deceptive experience. Man has little control over his destiny, as Blake can so easily by a thoughtless hand brush away the fly, even swat it! In the summer days the air is full of joy, but 'in the midst of life we are in death". Yet for all that, Blake senses in the action of the fly, that the moment must be enjoyed. Even here it is possible to reflect

that Blake is expressing his own feelings of divine providence, for he certainly rejected predestination, as his comment in Swedenborg's Divine Providence was later to show.

Plate 41 The Angel

In this poem Blake expresses the sense of feeling when one moves from innocence to experience, especially if the innocence has not found any fulfilment. The woman in the poem appears to have been petted as a child, but the Angel-guardian was standing by. Is there regret in this?

> For the time of youth was fled:
> And grey hairs were on my head.

She grieves because of the lack of experience, though she had the chance of love, and in old age bitterly regrets not having taken it when offered. Indeed, she feels that her willingness in maturity is rejected; things have come too late for her.

Although the only dream poem in Experience 'The Angel' reflects the predicament of the innocent maiden, who is unfulfilled by experience, yet longs for experience of love. The guardian angel has kept her safe from harm all her life. But the angel may represent no more than conventional morality. She has protected herself with modesty and coyness, and there remains closed what should be open to her through experience.

> So he took his wings and fled:

and all that was left to her,

> I dried my tears & armd my fears,
> With ten thousand shields and spears.

Fear takes over: so this is more than a dream poem, it is the tale of the adult who has passed innocence by with frustration and regret, and cannot find contentment, except perhaps in dreams, of the innocence that

was unreal and the experience that never was.

The angel in this poem may receive the title 'guardian', but the angel does not reveal that it is of the spiritual mould. Blake would be aware that in Swedenborg's thought every individual has two angels and two spirits to guard them in this earthly life:

> Angels from each society are sent to men to watch over them, and to lead them away from evil affections and consequent thoughts, and to inspire them with good affections so far as they will receive them in freedom; and by means of these they also control the deeds or works of men by removing as far as possible evil intentions.[15]

Plate 42 The Tyger

This poem went through three versions as can be seen from the two recorded in manuscript and the etched plate. It holds a series of questions not answers. It is the riddle of the universe, the contrast of good and evil, the wild and the tame, and the sense of one Creator fashioning both. Certainly Blake captures the feeling of the tiger, as most people think of that animal, whether he saw one or not. The Zoo in the Tower would be open to him. The strength, power and daring symmetry bring with them a feeling of fear, especially if this animal was confronted 'in the forest of the night'. Here is the fear of experience; but experience does give way to the higher sense of innocence. Hence the contrast of tiger and lamb. The lamb will lie down with the tiger one day; there will be an embracing of innocence again, despite the trials and tribulations of life.

The thought of innocence being at one with experience, as the wild and tame become one, is a reflection of Isaiah 11:6:

> The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them

The poem acknowledges for Blake the great Creator whose

'immortal hand' is greater than any artist on earth. Animals in the bible have always been used to express certain characteristics in man. 'Go tell that fox', says Jesus when speaking of Herod (Luke 13:32). In a Swedenborgian context animals express thoughts and affections in the heart and life of man:

> The living creatures of the earth, in general, correspond to affections, gentle and useful creatures to good affections, fierce and useless ones to evil affections. In particular, cattle and their young correspond to the affections of the natural mind, sheep and lambs to the affections of the spiritual mind, while winged creatures, according to their species, correspond to the intellectual things of either mind...Consequently, every animal has an innate knowledge in accord with its life's affection. Man, too, is similar to animals as to his natural man...if he is gentle he called a sheep or a lamb, if fierce, a bear or wolf, if cunning, a fox or a serpent.[16]

Plate 43 My Pretty Rose Tree, Ah Sun Flower, The Lilly

On this one plate we have three poems, concerned with the theme of love. In 'My Pretty Rose Tree' there is a rebuff, that only the thorns are seen. Is the rejection of another the cause for the rebuff and reproach of the wife? Certainly Blake shows a faithfulness to his wife, if the story of his desire to bring a young girl into his home is true. Blake was content for the young girl to stay but Catherine rejected the idea, and Blake showed his concern for his wife by not letting the young girl stay with them. The young girl is seen more as a young lover for Blake than a helper for Catherine in the home.

In 'Ah Sun Flower' is there the thought that if love finds not its fulfilment in this world, it will be found in the next? Both the maid and the youth turn to the sun, but the maid is shrouded in frigid modesty, and the youth's desires are unfulfilled. Swedenborg makes the statement that there is a partner in heaven for everyone after death. Blake may have been aware of this passage. It is found in Conjugial

Love which at the time had not been translated into English. But its contents would be known in discussion in the Theosophical Society. It would be a topic easily picked up and discussed:

> Those who after preparation are introduced into heaven, there is provided a marriage with a consort whose soul inclines to union with the soul of the other, so that they no longer wish to be two lives, but one life.[17]

In 'The Lilly' there is a sense of innocence and selflessness. The rose puts forth a thorn, and the humble sheep a "threatening horn", but the lilly shows only her beauty and her delight, an example of the purity of true love. This appears to capture what Swedenborg says in Conjugial Love:

> Truly conjugial love...in excellence and pleasantness, surpasses all other loves, so that all other loves in respect to it are of little account...It exceeds the love of self, the love of the world and even the love of life.[18]

Plate 44 The Garden of Love

'The Garden of Love' expresses the contrast between a religion of love and freedom, and a religion of law and restraint. Blake appears to be constructing a symbolic landscape in the form of Swedenborgian correspondences. The garden of love bears sweet flowers, the garden of cold faith, thorns and briars. The 'Priests in black gowns' so well reflect the clergy of faith alone, the 'Dealers in Mysteries'. In the design of the poem we see the priest instructing the boy and girl in his doctrines. Organised religion becomes an agent of repression, with the briar binding the innocence joy and desire.

Relevant to this poem is the Memorable Relation in True Christian Religion, No. 385, which reads in part:

> Faith separate from Charity deadens all Things, and Faith joined with Charity enlovens all Things. The nature of such Deadening, and Enlivening, may be seen

> visibly in our spiritual World...for where Faith is joined with Charity, there are paradisiacal Gardens, flowry Walks, and verdant Groves...but where Faith is separate from Charity, there doth not grow as much as a blade of Grass, nor any green Thing, except it be on Thorns and Briers...At that moment there were standing not far away certain of the Clergy, whom the Angel called Justifiers and Sbotifiers of Men by Faith alone, and also Arcanists, that is, Dealers in Mysteries. We repeated to them this account of Faith and Charity...they turned away and said 'We did not hear you'..."We do not wish to hear".

The 'Thou shalt not' written over the door of the Chapel may be an image of the door to the Chapel in East Cheap, which Blake attended with his wife for the First General Conference of the New Church. The words over the door on that occasion read 'Nunc Licet': ('Now it is permitted' to enter with the intellect into the mysteries of faith). The Chapel may be in contrast to the Established Church or the giant edifices of the Metropolis. The 'graves' in the garden could be the image of 'death', for comments would be expressed at Conference of the 'Old Church', or the 'Dead Church', in reference to the Established Church when contrasted with the New Church.

Plate 45 The Little Vagabond

This poem offers the reader at least four levels of view; that of the mother, which is totally different from the mother figure found in Innocence; that of the parson who expresses for Blake experience, and is in keeping with Blake's own feelings, on the clergy in general; that of Dame Lurch, reflecting Blake's own description of education as it was viewed in the world; and the little vagabond, who is seen more as a child of experience, that of the carefree, irresponsible and thoughtless child of innocence.

The mother is neglectful of her offspring, much like the Church itself, which is cold and uninviting. The parson personifies authority

which takes the joy out of living. While Dame Lurch, who is always in Church, shows that education is not to 'draw out' but to beat into a child, and at the same time beat out any sense of individuality within the child. This in Blake's mind was not education, therefore he warmed more to the descriptions of the education of little children in heaven, as he read in Swedenborg's Heaven and Hell

> It can be confirmed what the education of little children is in heaven, namely, that it is leading them by means of an understanding of truth and the wisdom of good into the angelic life, which is love to the Lord and mutual love, in which is innocence. But how different in many cases is the education of little children on the earth...I was in the street of a large city, and saw little boys fighting with each other; a crowd flocked around and looked on with much plesure; and I was told that little [19] boys are incited to such fights by their own parents.

Swedenborg's own reflections show that beating and punishment was an acceptable thing on earth.

The parson who expresses authority, the person of wisdom and experience, is here again for Blake the person who lacks charity and compassion. If he would but show the joy in living, heaven itself might be more appealing.

The little vagabond presents a picture Blake would have seen many times in the streets of London. Urchins who were neglected and unloved. For Blake the image is often seen in the little chimney-sweepers. Yet a child can bounce back no matter the situation, and in the little vagabond you see the spirit of the young child against all the odds. Someone does need to have compassion on him. Blake sees not only the change from innocence to experience, but how hard it is to fight to regain the sense of innocence. The vagabond would have a better relationship with God, the Dame, the Parson and the Church, if they could improve his lot in life. Certainly he cannot look to his

mother for help.

Plate 46 London

This poem picks up the same theme as 'The Little Vagabond'. 'Mind-forg'd manacles' grip the weak, poor and down-trodden through the action of society, convention and circumstance. The youthful harlot plies her trade, but 'plagues' (venereal disease) have now afflicted her new born child, just like the 'marriage bed' itself. Marriage and prostitution are mutually dependent institutions both of which Blake sees as living death.

In a sociological context Blake is aware of the lot of the 'Chimney-sweeper', which he mentions several times in the Songs. Their plight, because many are little children, has a powerful impact on Blake's mind. In contrast the Church stands with little concern except to be aware that 'Every blackning Church appalls' at what rubs off on that institution by its neglect of its duty. All of this in a proud city that boasts its royal charter.

In both The Last Judgment and The True Christian Religion Swedenborg comments on the 'spiritual' London, which could have influenced Blake in his writing of London, or at least confirmed the evil he saw in the city. The passages from both works are identical:

> There are two large cities resembling London, to which mot of the English come after death. The first of these I have been allowed to view and walk through. In the middle of the city, where in London is the meeting place

> of the merchants, is what they call the Exchange; that is where the rulers live. Above this centre is the east, below it the west, on the right side the south, on the left the north. In the eastern quarter live those who have been particularly distinguished by leading charitable lives; there are magnificent palaces there. In the southern quarter live the wise, amid much splendour. In the northern quarter live those who have above others loved freedom of speech and writing. In the western quarter live those who preach justification by faith alone. On the right in this quarter is the entrance to this city, and also the way out; those who live wicked lives are sent out by it. The priests in the west, who teach faith alone, do not dare to enter the city by the main streets, but only through the narrower lanes, since the only inhabitants who are tolerated in that city are those who believe in charity. I heard complaints about the preachers in the west, that they display such skill and eloquence in their elegant sermons, bringing in the dogma of justification by faith which is unknown to their hearers, that they do not know whether good is to be done or not. They preach about faith as intrinsically good, and separate it from the good of charity, which they call merit-seeking and thus unacceptable to God. But when those who live in the eastern and southern quarters of the city hear such sermons, they leave the churches; and afterwards[20] the preachers are deprived of their priestly office.
>
> The other large city called London is not in the Christian heartland, but remote from it to the north. To that come after death those who are inwardly wicked. At its centre there is an opening leading to hell,[21] and from time to time people are swallowed up in it.

The clergy are not seen in a good light, in the first extract, and it very much expresses the feeling that Blake had towards the clergy of his day, and of the church in general, which was supposed to be an institution for good. True charity was not at the heart of the institution, for it was more like a 'satanic mill'.

The Last Judgment was translated by Robert Hindmarsh and issued in 1763, and The True Christian Religion was translated by the Rev. John Clowes and issued in 1781. Blake would be aware of the first work, for an extract in Divine Love and Wisdom is marked in his reading. And he was later to make a drawing 'The Spiritual Preceptor' based on a passage from The True Christian Religion.

Plate 47 The Human Abstract

In manuscript this poem is entitled 'The Human Image' and was obviously intended to be a contrast poem in Experience to 'The Divine Image' which appears in Innocence. Blake did write another poem, "A Divine Image', which is rather strong in its satire, and he never used it in print, though the etched plate was available.

"The 'Human Abstract' shows the destructive power of reasoning, for it destroys life. Pity and mercy express the presence of poverty and suffering which are a part of the human condition. Mutual peace bring calm to all; but selfishness brings only cruelty. Blake shows the false virtues that arise from selfishness, fear and weakness. The Tree of Mystery represents the life of religion, with the priesthood feeding off the leaves. In Revelation, a prophetic book Blake no doubt read, the Tree of Life produced 'leaves' that were for "the healing of the nations' (Rev. 22.2). Blake always sees the church as a destructive force, a 'satanic mill'. The jet black raven is the harbinger of death, and the end of creation. In the Noah story the raven did not return, only the dove. In the final stanza nature appears to be unaware of the Tree, which the Genesis story of creation sited in the Garden of Eden. What has grown from experience is the reasoning power of the human mind - 'the human abstract' - and through that no sense is made of the Tree of Life.

In Arcana Caelestia, a work Blake would be aware of, Swedenborg states:

> Men's desire to probe into mysteries of faith by means of sensory evidence and factual knowledge was not only the cause of the down fall of the Most Ancient Church...but also the cause of the downfall of every church.[22]

> Anybody can recognise that the basic assumptions a person makes, even when completely false, govern him, and that all knowledge and reasoning buttress those assumptions.[23]

These thoughts find expression in this poem.

Plate 48 Infant Sorrow

The 'Infant Joy' of Innocence gives way to the 'Infant Sorrow' of Experience. Here Blake sees only the negation of life; experience swallows up all innocence. The mother groans and the father weeps, and the infant is born into the world in pain and sorrow. Soon 'like a fiend hid in a cloud' the child will discover the world and the experience it offers. The mother's protective role is over and the child, though helpless, is now independent. The father weeps for jealousy because experience relies on mutual fear for its existence. The child struggles in the father's hand, and the mother appears indifferent and impotent to both. The inevitable fate must be accepted.

Blake's Notebook reveals that this was to have been a longer poem, covering the cycle of life to maturity, with reflection in old age. But in the published form it contains only two stanzas.

In Heaven and Hell 331 he would have read:

> The earthly body is in itself gross, and receives its first sensations and motions not from the inner or spiritual world, but from the outer or natural world. In consequence, little children in this world must be taught to walk...speak; and even their senses must be opened by use.. It is different with little children in the other life...they act at once in accordance with their interiors.

Plate 49 A Poison Tree

In 'The Human Abstract' Blake made reference to the Tree of Life, in the guise of the Tree of Mystery; in this poem reference to the apple, which is the accepted fruit of the Genesis Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, Eve took and gave to Adam and both were driven out of

the Garden of Eden by God. Blake picks up this theme as a demonstration of Christian forebearance. This is offered with great magnanimity by the giver, but the receiver often remains ignorant of the giver's attitude. The repressed anger become malevolent. Only mutual understanding offers reconciliation. Otherwise, the fears are 'waterd' and they grow, and the 'apple bright' is seen, which is stolen by the foe. But then, is the apple pure or is it the fruit of the poison tree?

Blake is puzzling over the incident in the Garden of Eden wondering who had done wrong, the innocent pair or the Creator? Blake challenged Swedenborg on the subject of Divine Providence, thinking that predestination was involved; was it the action on the part of the Creator which forced the innocent couple to act in the way they did? Was it wrong to place temptation before them in this way? Blake is a champion for truth. The following extract from Arcana Caelestia on the Genesis incident certainly is reflected in the action of the foe in the poem, for he becomes a non-being in the eyes of Blake.

> Expelling the man is divesting him completely of all will for good and of all understanding of truth, even to the point of his being separated from them, and ceasing to be a human being.[24]

Plate 50 A Little Boy Lost

Self love is the natural state of man, so Blake recognised in this poem. He may come to know life through the experiences of others.

> I love you like a little bird
> That picks up crumbs around the door.

In his simplicity the little boy cannot raise his thoughts, that like Anselm, in Cur Deus Homo present the proof of God's existence, by stating that the idea in itself is sufficient proof, otherwise a greater that the greatest conceivable could be thought.

> Nor is it possible to Thought
> A greater than itself to know.

The Priest is infuriated by the little boy, since religion offers the means of knowing, and taking the boy by his hair takes him into church and makes him stand by the altar. The admiration of the onlookers to all this again expresses for Blake the absence of real wisdom and understanding. Can the child understand the mystery of the sacrament, that 'holy mystery'? In this Blake sees only the ignorance of those in the church of the true meaning of life. The little child 'in an iron chain' shows only the ignorance of man, meekly obeying the dictates of the church without any real understanding of the meaning or purpose. Surely declares Blake this should not happen on Albion's shore. The country that boasts of freedom should not chain down the mind.

Though man develops from innocence by experience to wisdom, this must be in freedom of thought, and not in the mere acceptance of dogma. Blake was later to see over the door into the Great East Cheap Chapel, where the First General Conference was held, the words, Nunc Licet, ('Now is it allowable' to enter with the understanding into the mysteries of faith).

Plate 51 A Little Girl Lost

S.T. Coleridge thought this poem could be taken too literally, and he felt it should not have appeared in Songs.

The lost little girl could be the sense of loss to the father, that by experience she had grown up, and was no longer his 'little girl'. When innocence is lost experience offers a different picture of innocence, for self love, fear, deceit enter in. In tragic form the picture is told; youthful lovers met, acknowledge their passion in the morning light, and agree to meet again in the quiet of the evening. Then the girl encounters her father and her face is an open book. He is aware of what has happened and he feels hurt: his little girl has grown

up. She is too terrified to plead her cause. But she has tasted of the forbidden fruit, and in the knowing her father is outraged. He seems to forget in his old age the joy of young love.

Sweet love was thought a crime.

The little girl must pursue her love openly, since clandestine love leads only to lust, for sensual love without the aid of wisdom cannot find true fulfilment. Here is the action of lost innocence and the onset of experience, and Blake shows both the joy and the sorrow it brings, and the sense of loss and discovery.

Plate 52 **'To Tirzah'**

Blake was aware of the Swedenborg concept that Jesus took on an 'infirm human' from Mary in order to enter this world and battle with temptation and hell. This infirm human he put off at the resurrection, and now reigns in glory in his Divine Humanity. In a set of little works, available at the time of Blake's reading of Swedenborg, one such work was Doctrine of the Lord:

> the Lord put off the human from Mary, which in itself, was like the human of another man, and thus material, and put on a Human from the Father, which in itself was like his Divine and thus substantial; from which the Human was also made Divine...the Lord had from the beginning a human from Mary and put it off successively while he was in the world. He had two states, which is called the state of humiliation, or exinanition, and the state of glorification, or of unition with the Divine which is called the Father...He did not call her 'Mother' but 'Woman'.[25]

'Thou Mother of my Mortal part', shows Blake's awareness of the implications of Doctrine of the Lord 35 and that he recognised man also has a spiritual body which he does not receive from his mother, but his heavenly Father. 'It is Raised a Spiritual Body'.

The above is also reinforced in this poem by Blake's reference to

Then what have I to do with thee?

These are words which can be found in John 4 in connection wth the story of the women at the well.

Blake stresses the Swedenborgian teaching that the reality of the spiritual body bears no relationship to the material body, but is an expression of man's true love and wisdom, the very exercise of his inner, spiritual life while on earth.

Implied also is the thought that the innocence of wisdom comes when experience has also been put off, in the same way that the innocence of ignorance is put off as man enters experience of life and being.

This poem may be a contrast in Experience to 'The Divine Image' in Innocence, since both relate to the concept of the Divine Humanity as the true image of God and man.

Plate 53 The School Boy

This poem, which first appeared in Innocence, was transferred to Experience, but in effect it is more at home among the poems of Innocence. It expresses the destruction of innocence, reflected in the youthful joy of life on any summer's morning, that must give way to school.

The little ones spend the day
in sighing and dismay.

Blake was not impressed with the education system: he himself received an education of self-development, in the school of life itself. He was conscious of the restriction and the burden, when there should be freedom. This thought he takes up in the image,

How can the bird that is born for joy,
Sit in a cage and sing.

He marked the passage in his copy of Heaven and Hell relating to the education of children in heaven. They were taught by representatives suited to their genius, and by an understanding of truth and the wisdom of good into angelic life.[26] The school boy may not be the charity child, yet both suffered at the hands of adults. Experience cannot always guide innocence in the right direction; its own self love and self importance can get in the way, as was the case of Dame Lurch and the benefactors sitting in the pews listening to the child on 'Holy Thursday'.

Plate 54 The Voice of the Ancient Bard

This is yet another poem Blake first placed in Innocence, but in Experience it recalls the Bard of the Introduction. In terrifying vision of experience, the Bard seeks to reassure the 'Youth of delight' that the morning of regeneration is at hand. There is the image of newness and rebirth, and the Old Testament feeling of both the day of judgment and the Day of the Lord:

Doubt is fled,& clouds of reason.
Dark disputes & artful teazing.
Folly is an endless maze,
Tangled roots perplex her ways,
How many have fallen there!

Like the prophetic voice Blake "reveals' the future. The hope of the innocence of wisdom is there, to those who use experience as a stepping stone. It is the same theme that Blake was to use in calling the sons of Albion to rise up to greet the New Age. A new age was dawning in the presence of the New Church coming down from heaven, and Blake himself was a child of that New Age.

14'. The Marriage of Heaven and Hell

Introduction

Blake's criticism of philosophical, scientific and religious thought cannot be separated from his social criticism. He had a great concern for the poor, the labouring classes, the downtrodden, the orphans and the outcasts of society. The world was not of their own making, but the result of exploitation by the wealthy classes. He uses the term 'hell' to express his feelings of revulsion against the social conditions. He attacks religious thinkers in respect of their human and social values, as much as their doctrine and dogma. The 'dark satanic mills' were not the industrial factories, though many outwardly must have appeared so, but were in effect the institutions of the establishment. Within his poetic work Blake was challenging the society in which he lived. As Bronowski expressed it:

> Blake speaks the discontent of his times. Until we know the discontent, we do not begin to read his writings, because we do not speak their language.[1]

Blake's language is one of revolution, the French and the Industrial. He hoped for a better society, freed from drudgery and fear. He wished for the 'New Jerusalem' to be built in 'England's green and pleasant land'. Swedenborg's teachings, at first sight, gave signs of hope that the new age was present. But he soon discovered that Swedenborg's philosophy appeared to him to be perpetuating the old order. In heaven, and with the angels, there is wealth and leisure, with the devils of hell a continued drudgery. Angels live in palaces and houses, in hell such buildings do not exist. Was this a reflection of society here, with those who possessed all things, and those that had nothing, or a true vision of things 'seen'?

In Blake's eyes this was the view Swedenborg was presenting.

Heaven is seen in terms of delight with all the necessities of life being given 'gratis' by the Lord. Hell represents those who depend on their own work and energy. Swedenborg moved in the circle of kings and queens and princes and nobility. Here was the upper class of society, and what appeared to Blake to be the inhabitants of heaven. Presence in that kingdom did not rest on merit but on privilege. Hell was the opposite. Swedenborg's position as an assessor of mines made him aware of the conditions of those who worked in the mines and did manual work. And Sabri-Tabrizi sees the vision of 'hell', in Swedenborg's Heaven and Hell, as a mirror image of the conditions of those found in the mines:

> By the word 'Hell' he indicates the conditions of those who work in mines and do manual work, or those who do not possess the glory and wealth of Angels. The people he calls Devils.[2]

A contemporary of Swedenborg, Carl Linnaeus, when visiting the Great Copper Mine at Fahlun, which was near to Swedenborg's own mine, was struck by the sight of the pit:

> From this mine arose a continual smoke, and the whole effect of it gave one the idea that the descriptions of hell, which the theologians use to make an impression upon the mind of the man to be saved, is taken from this or similar pits. Never could any poet describe the Kingdom of the underworld, never could any theologian describe a hell, more horrible than pits like these.[3]

This description is not far removed from the verbal expressions found in Swedenborg's descriptions of hell:

> It has been granted me to look into the hells, and see what is their quality within, for when it is well-pleasing to the Lord, a spirit or angel, who is above, may penetrate by sight into the places beneath...Some hells appear to the view like caverns and dens in rocks tending inwards...into the deep obliquely...some hells appear to the view like caves and dens, such as wild beasts inhabit in forests...such as are seen in mines, with tunnels extending towards the lower regions.[4]

The openings or gates to the hells that are beneath the plains and valleys present to the sight different

> appearances...They are covered over, and do not open except when evil spirits from the world of spirits are cast in hither; and when they open there bursts forth from them either something like the fire and smoke that is seen in the air from burning buildings...or like the soot such as comes from a building chimney.[5]

Swedenborg's verbal expression of the descriptions of heaven may well follow a similar pattern, reflecting something of his own life style. The son of a bishop,he was 'invited to eat with the King and Queen (of Sweden) at their table (an honour granted only to the Peers of the realm) and likewise since with the hereditary prince' (Letter 1769). He may have been short of money in his student days, since he was dependent upon an allowance from his father: but when he inherited the mines and ironworks from his mother's and his stepmother's families, and received a salary for life from the Board of Mines, he was able to live the life of the leisured classes, pursuing his own personal interest and travels. So we find that the clothes of Angels and the food they eat is more delicate than the most beautiful on earth. They live in houses surrounded by gardens,[6] and their magnificence exceeds all descriptions 'being ornamented with such decorations as neither expressions of language, nor science are able to describe'.[7]

It is little wonder that Blake in Marriage reverses the accepted image. His background was totally different from that of Swedenborg. He depended for work and livelihood upon his hands, as an engraver; and even his poetic work depends in large measure on the plates he engraved and printed, and the colouring he and his wife gave the printed sheets. He had no family wealth to commission printers to do his work, as was the case with Swedenborg. Blake had to depend upon his own 'energy' - 'The busy bee has not time for sorrow' (as he expressed it in the 'Proverbs of Hell').[8] He believed in the universal brotherhood and equality of man, which for him was the sign of true

christianity. Thus, he opposed the rigid class system of Swedenborg, which was present in the world, and which he was equally suggesting was present in the next world also.

The title of Blake's work is obviously based on Swedenborg's Heaven and Hell. At the conclusion of his reading Divine Love and Wisdom, Blake wrote

> Heaven & Hell are born together.

All his comments in that work are written in prose, but in the final line there is a sense of the poetical. When he was disillusioned by Swedenborg in his reading of Divine Providence, the haunting line he wrote in Divine Love and Wisdom, could easily be the seed for his work which is a satire of Swedenborg's Heaven and Hell, and his doctrinal opposition to that work.

Blake sees 'contraries' as the expression of development. The young child must assert himself against his environment; otherwise there is no development. In the struggle he will find himself in conflict with the world. He will equally have to struggle against his parents, for the sake of his own independence. The business of development is not an easy struggle, hence the need to marry what attempts are made to resolve the tensions and conflicts. As Blake sees it:

> From these contraries spring what the religious call
> Good & Evil. Good is the passive that obeys Reason.
> Evil is the active, springing from Energy.
> Good is Heaven. Evil is Hell.

In his use of Reason-Energy, Blake is not making these contraries absolute, but necessities for man's development. If the Devil were absolutely evil, then there would be no purpose served by these terms. But the presence becomes the contrary whereby development is made.

> To be Good only, is to be
> A God or else a Pharisee

Blake is reflecting the times. The negativeness of the Ten Commandments Blake abhors, because it is convention at work. There is a passive morality which he despises. Religion uses the system of Law and government to restrain the human spirit. This is done in the name of Reason, man's ability to rationalise. People are afraid of the power of Energy, which will give them life, and they seek to suppress it in the name of religion.

Blake takes a Swedenborgian device in Marriage, in his use of the 'Memorable Fancies'. In some of the major works of Swedenborg, 'Memorable Relations' are included which record experiences in the spiritual world. Often these are the means of confirming an illustration, expressed by way of conversations with angels and spirits. So Blake adopts a similar approach. He first sets the Argument, followed by the 'Memorable Fancies'.

Plate 2 The Argument

This is inspired by Isaiah 35 which speaks of man's progress on the 'way of holiness'. For Blake this way is the 'perilous path'. Once there was the ideal state of the 'just man', now in the presence of contraries, 'Red clay' (Adam) makes plain the natural man and his world - the 'Phantasy of evil man', as he called it in his annotation to Divine Love and Wisdom.[9] Reason occupies the perilous path, that the just man is forced into the wilds "where lions roam' and 'sneaking serpent walks'. The images from the biblical creation story, strengthened by Blake's citation of Isaiah xxiv & xxxv. The former chapter describes the Lord's devastation of Edom.

> And thorns shall come up to her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof; and it shall be an habitation of dragons, and a court for owls. The wild

> beasts of the desert shall also meet with the wild beasts of the island, and the satyr shall cry to his fellows; the screech owl also shall rest there, and find for herself a place of rest...Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read: no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate; for my mouth hath commanded, and his spirit it hath gathered them. And he hath cast the lot of them, and his hand hath divided it into them by line; they shall possess it for ever, from generation to generation shall they dwell therein.

But a contrasting verse from Isaiah 63, gives us another reference to Edom, with a picture of the reuniting of the contraries, which were separated in the first citation from Isaiah. Now we have the picture of the Saviour, who 'cometh from Edom';

> I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me; for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and will stain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.

Blake's citation of Isaiah 35 gives the union of the contraries and 'the return of Adam into Paradise':

> The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose...Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing; for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.

The just man will be able to walk again the 'perilous path' between the contraries: 'And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness'.(Isaiah 35.8) Further, the wilderness will be no more where once roamed the savage lion:

> No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go therein, it shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there; And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Spiritual man holds the balance between the contraries, and Blake and his devils offer the information by way of a guide; in much the same way as Swedenborg's angels offered information. But Swedenborg's

salvable angels become Blake's salvable devils. Swedenborg had given but the old truths in a comparatively new dress; Blake was offering new truths. Energy was the essence of life and the hope for mankind, not the rational truths of reason.

Here was true worship to be found in respecting the creative energy in man. Blake marked this clearly in his annotations to Swedenborg's Divine Love and Wisdom, for he writes, 'the whole of the New Church is in the Active Life & not in ceremonies at all'.[10] So in his Memorable Fancy which concludes Marriage he pictures the Devil teaching the Angel how to read the Bible!

> The worship of God is: Honouring his gifts in other men, each according to his genius, and loving the greatest men best: those who envy or calumniate great men hate God; for there is no other God.

Plate 3 A new heaven

Blake follows the narrative structure found in Swedenborg's major works. In Arcana Caelestia there is inter-chapter material which relates to spiritual experiences as well as doctrine, and from this information Swedenborg published several smaller works.[11] In True Christian Religion there are 'Memorable Relations'; these are reports of incidents, situations and discussions in the spiritual world, which both illustrate and confirm the ideas developed in the associated chapters of the work.

The Plate opens with the words "As a new heaven is begun, and it is now thirty-three years since its advent'. The advent is Blake's own birth. But it also marks the Lord's Second Advent according to Swedenborg, which followed as a consequence the Last Judgment in 1757, the date of Blake's birth. In the margin of one copy Blake wrote '1790', in order to fix the date of the writing in relation to his own birth. The work was issued much later than that date, the watermark

suggests not earlier than 1793. But Blake was following Swedenborg's own device for he also marked the date of his call, by dating his own birth.[12] Also members of the Theosophical Society used a similar device in recording the date. They would give the usual date on their letter, and then alongside it the date since the time of the Second Advent, for example, 1759=2.

Swedenborg's 'Last Judgment' justifies the position of the angels in heaven, but for Blake the Last Judgment of 1757 heralds the onset of the New Age. This is a Last Judgment on social injustice and evil, as he expressed it in his Last Judgment:

> A Last Judgment is not for the purpose of making Bad Men better, but for the Purpose of hindering them from oppressing the Good with Poverty[13] & Pain by means of Such Vile Arguments & Insinuations.

Blake can accept that a new heaven is being reorganised, as Swedenborg suggested, but he equally sees hell as continuing because it is eternal. In his appeal to the rational Swedenborg made his truth final, and thus placed a limitation on truth itself: it could not be developing or progressing. For Blake, truth is ever renewing and ever changing the nature of its source. His hell is therefore eternal because its nature is the substance of life itself. Swedenborg's heaven was but a tempting representation.

'And lo! Swedenborg is the Angel sitting at the tomb; his writings are the linen clothes folded up". A reference no doubt to the tomb of Christ and the 'linen clothes laid by themselves', which Peter saw when he ran to the sepulchre. (Luke 24.12). But also implied is the laying aside of the 'folded clothes', which suggest the works of Swedenborg. Blake had risen himself from the thoughts contained in Swedenborg's work to something higher, and in the progress he has put them aside. Certainly he felt his presentation was new, whereas Swedenborg's was but the old truths in a new dress. Blake may be

thinking that inspiration had left Swedenborg.

In this Plate Blake shows the value of contraries without which no progress can be made. To Swedenborg good and evil are mutual negations rather than contraries. Human existence represents 'the passive that obeys Reason', and the 'active arising from Energy'. To Swedenborg man has the choice between either good or evil, and in the choosing his 'ruling love' is determined. And it is 'ruling love' which determines man's final destination. This is why Blake makes his comment of 'spiritual predestination' in his reading of Divine Providence.

For Swedenborg, 'evil' arises from Hell, and 'good' from Heaven, and they are received by man through his freewill. Man is held in mid-point, which Swedenborg calls 'equilibrium', and the response by man to the influence one way or the other is dependent upon his choice; thus, he chooses either heaven or hell, good or evil.[14] Blake cannot see an **omniscient** God creating evil in order that the balance may be maintained in the choice offered to man. So in Marriage God is seen as providing the two contraries, which in themselves are mutual, and are there for the sake of man's progression in spiritual knowledge and life. Good and evil are seen as arising from religious convention, whereas for Blake both are the contraries God in his perfection has provided.

Plate 4 The voice of the Devil

Here is a section acting like a 'Memorable Fancy'. 'All Bibles or sacred codes' give rise to man's errors. Blake then proceeds to note these errors. In relation to man it is body and soul, for which he can see no distinction.Only the **religious fantasize** on the existence of the soul, and heaven and hell. In their creation good and evil were a unity. So Blake is not only challenging Swedenborg's understanding of the situation, but that of the whole of christendom. For Blake 'energy'

arises from the soul, and that is the only life both in soul and body.

> Energy is the only life and is from the Body and Reason
> is the bound or outward circumference of Energy.

The body is only 'a portion of Soul discern'd by the five Senses'.

Blake sees, as the voice of the Devil declares, that the rational understanding of the Bible has been dependent upon interpretation. Who is then to say that they are right, as all declare themselves to be so? Blake said to Crabb Robinson [15] 'what are called vices in the natural world are the highest sublimities in the spiritual world'. Blake had not moved forward in his life from the principle set in the 'thirty-three years of advent'. Evils he saw as strength, not weakness, and valuable contraries towards progression.

The Bible is the historical interpretation given by the religious: it is not Blake's view, however. He comments in Lacoon, 'The Old & New Testaments are the Great Codes of Art'.[16]

Plates 5-6 The shadow of desire

The term 'shadow' for Blake was a technical term for 'restrained desire'. In this plate he criticises Milton's desire which was 'weak enough to be restrained' that 'the restrained or Reason usurps...& governs'. In history the 'Governor of Reason is call'd Messiah'. The original archangel is common to all, he is the Devil or Satan, 'and his children are call'd Sin & Death'. Could the charge be set against Swedenborg who equally speaks of good and evil, and Hell? Swedenborg simply reports, showing his distaste for what is evil. In Blake's note, which is a summary of the contents of the plate, an excuse is found for the criticism of Milton; when he speaks of 'fetters' he writes of Angels and God, when in freedom he writes of Devil and Hell, 'because he was a true poet and of the Devil's party without knowing it'. And all poets are of the Devil's party, and they are the saviours

of the world, in what they write and say. Do they alone seek to project the true contrary which helps in man's progression?

Plates 6-7 Memorable Fancy

The opening lines of this plate are a parody of Swedenborg's 'Memorable Relations'. 'As I was walking among the fires of hell, delighted with the enjoyment of Genius'. The setting of the spiritual scene, with landscape, building, garments in a Swedenborgian device, to be followed by some rational elaborate argument. Blake takes up the same props as he gives the setting for the 'Proverbs of Hell'.

Blake challenges Swedenborg in his comment that his recording of the 'Proverbs of Hell' is 'better than any description of buildings or garments'. Certainly Swedenborg frequently records descriptions of the colour of dress, or the layout of a town, all of which had a spiritual import as it relates the geographical scheme of the spiritual world. In this way the spiritual conditions are categorised, and in that there may well be the possibility of seeing it as some giant mechanical system. Blake cannot accept this approach. His recording of the 'Proverbs of Hell' present the logic of hell as opposed to the reasonings of heaven.

Walking among the fires of hell, collecting his proverbs, Blake has his vantage point, so that on his return he clearly sees the 'abyss of the five senses' which constrain all men on earth. The mighty Devil 'folded in black cloud' is at work writing in 'corroding fires' the following sentence:

> How do you know but ev'ry Bird that cuts the airy way,
> Is an immense world of delight, clos'd by your senses five?

These words strongly suggest the limitation placed on man through his sensual condition, and the juxtaposition that Blake finds himself,

suggests also the limitations of Swedenborg. For in this Memorable Fancy Blake is following Swedenborg in that inner communication with the spirit world, while still aware of this world.

Blake received from his dead brother Robert, in vision, the new way of etching, which may be hinted at in the term 'corroding fires'.

Plates 7-10 Proverbs of Hell

The contents of the proverbs suggest a man of great observation, who may equally be at odds with the world in which he lives. But gems of poetic truths are revealed which make this work more than a parody or a satire of Swedenborg's thoughts, but the deep reflections of a genuine and sincere man seeking to know the truth which will set him free. This can be seen in any random selection that is made of the proverbs. For instance:

In seed time learn, in harvest teach, in winter enjoy.

These words reflect the wisdom of life's experience. And Blake studied well the Aphorisms of Lavater, that his proverbs contain common sense maxims, for there can be an excess to the path of wisdom. He was aware of the powerful influence of the eternal world, and knew full well that in viewing the same object, men could see completely differing perspectives.

The thankful receiver bears a plentiful harvest

Does this reflect the thankfulness of Blake towards his various patrons and friends? He needed their support for the maintenance of the body, though he was able always to support himself in mind and spirit. Blake was no madman!

To create a little flower is the labour of ages.

This statement is very reflective of Blake and his appreciation of nature, and of the power behind nature. Here is confirmation of the

famous lines from the 'Auguries of Innocence', found in Blake's note books:

> To see a world in a Grain of sand,
> And Heaven in a Wild Flower,
> hold Infinity in the palm of your hand,
> and Eternity in an hour.

The final words on the plates recording the proverbs, many of which are far from hellish in their tone, read,

> Enough! or Too much.

Is Blake thinking he has gone on a little too much in recording the proverbs? At times he felt that Swedenborg went on a little too much, and he obviously does not wish to fall into the same trap. Certainly the drawing which completes Plate 10 shows the Angel busy in recording the instructions given by the Devil, as though his very life depended on receiving and understanding what was given him.

Plate 11 All deities reside in the human breast

Swedenborg records the progress in life and thought from the time of the Most Ancient Church to the present time of the New Church of the Second Advent. Swedenborg speaks of spiritual knowledge having been lost, in which natural objects expressed a spiritual truth.[17]

Blake acknowledges that the ancients imbue objects with divine power, or genius, such as mountains, lakes and woods. As they studied each they assigned a particular genius 'under its mental deity'. Later the Priestcraft were to obscure this knowledge so that they could have power over the common people.

Swedenborg likewise separated the mental deity from the object. For Swedenborg the design of heaven is a reflection of angelic intelligence. For Blake such was a reflection of his energy, derived from the body not the natural world! Mental deities come from the spirit of man. The two cannot be separated for Blake as Swedenborg does

in Heaven and Hell

> the things that are in the heavens cannot be seen by the eyes of man's body, but are seen by the eyes of his spirit. When it seems good to the Lord, these are opened...and man... is raised up into the spiritual light in which he is from the his spirit.[18]

The poet animated the real object to give enjoyment to all, while the priest abstracted it in a passive manner. For Swedenborg animation expresses the rationalist point of view, as he writes:

> they who profess to believe in an invisible Divine, which they call the animated principle...from which all exists...reject faith in the Lord.[19]

Swedenborg rejects Deism in favour of the established Church; Blake rejects it because it is a mechanical philosophy. The Deists show the divinity in nature, but Blake shows it in man.

Poetic Genius is the source of all energy; it recognises creative man and links him to all mankind, through the life found in receptive objects for they activate the imagination to be found in man.

There was a fall into idolatry and magic, and then the power of the priesthood which held sway over the lives of simple folk. 'Mental deities' may hint at the use of religious language, and in the case of Swedenborg, his 'science of correspondences'. The awakening of this system brought a new awareness to the meaning of scripture, and to the spiritual aspirations of men. But Blake senses a mechanical system, of this equalling that, that he feels true genius is lost when it ceases to acknowledge that 'All deities reside in the human breast'. The hint of priesthood, at the closing of the plate, is not implying Swedenborg formed a priesthood for his new system, but that men within the New Church organisation were going along that road. Again, as his many comments in his poems show, Blake did not take too kindly to priests, and he condemned the introduction to Divine Providence as

'priestcraft'.

Plates 12-13 Memorable Fancy

Here we find Blake dining in the spiritual world with the prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel, and the subject under discussion is that of prophetic inspiration. What is implied by 'God spake to them'? In Isaiah's reply there is comment on finite and infinite:

> I saw no God, nor heard any, in a finite organical perception; but my senses discover'd the infinite in every thing, and as I was then perswaded, & remain confirm'd, that the voice of honest indignation is the voice of God, I cared not for consequences, but wrote.

In Divine Love and Wisdom Blake had a disagreement with Swedenborg over the assertion of there being only one infinite.[20] What Swedenborg had discovered to Blake's mind, was the ratio between spiritual and natural meanings within the Bible, which were 'finite organical perceptions'. And this could apply to his visions of the spiritual world as well. The prophet Isaiah, and so Blake,. had discovered 'the infinite in every thing', and confirmed that there was nothing as limiting as Swedenborg's rational descriptions. The truth then becomes but a mere description of the finite, whereas for Blake all things are infinite. It could be said that Isaiah's answer confirms what Blake had stated in the previous plate, that 'All deities reside in the human breast'. Moreover, both Isaiah and Ezekiel answer in the affirmative Blake's question, 'does a firm perswasion that a thing is so, make it so'? As Isaiah states, 'in ages of imagination this firm persusasion removed mountains'. Further, Ezekiel goes on to state that 'all nations believe the jews code and worship the jews god', and Israel accepted 'Poetic Genius (as you call it) was the first principle'. Whatever else was, and is found in the world, is a derivative of that principle. And 'like all firm perswasions', declared Ezekiel, and thus Blake, 'is come to pass'.

Blake is openly declaring that what he states is as much a validation of truth, as that of Swedenborg. And since he will not be constrained by any other man's system, his declared truth arising from Poetic Genius, is valid. Even the exhibition of Isaiah going barefoot and Ezekiel eating dung, were done to draw attention to poetic truth: so with Blake he desired to draw attention to the poetic truth he was declaring in his work.

Plate 14 Infernal method

That the world is to be destroyed by fire is an ancient tale, and there have been those willing to place a date on the event - 'at the end of six thousand years'. When the cherubic guard leaves his post at the tree of life, then man will bring about his own destruction. If man could only come to his senses in time, and climb out of 'his cavern' that the 'doors of perception were cleansed', then he might be saved. His printing by 'infernal method of corrosives' is a reference to the new method of making etching plates that Blake introduced, and which he said had been given to him by his dead brother Robert in a dream.[21] But equally so, there is a comparison with Swedenborg's commission, that the establishment of the Second Advent will be effected by

> a man, who not only can receive the doctrines of that Church in his understanding, but also publish them in print.[22]

Plate 15 Memorable Fancy - the Printing House

Blake is aware that the transmission of knowledge is through the printed page, so books and libraries are valuable assets. In them the store of knowledge and ideas are to be found. But this is not the sum total. Man advances from the rubbish of conventional laws to the expansion of knowledge, and so the improvement of man's creative faculties, and so to books and libraries: but what of the Poetic Genius?

Not all knowledge is the ratio of what can be gained in the respective chambers of the Printing House, for in the final chamber there are 'Unnamed forms', 'living fluids', of which men's books and libraries can only capture but an image.

In Arcana Caelestia reference is made to the six degrees of divine truth, of which the letter of the Word is the lowest.[23] Was it discussion on this aspect of truth, which Blake may have gained from the discussions at the Theosophical Society, which formed the structure of his printing house? If it were merely the five senses, then the extra chamber would not have been added. Six is not a number of symbolic import except when doubled to become twelve (e.g. twelve tribes, twelve precious stones in the holy city).

Plates 16-17 The Prolific and the Devouring

In this argument there is presented the dichotomy between energy and reason. The 'Giants' are energy, the 'sources of all activity' yet they are in chains due to the imposition of 'weak and tame minds'. But it does not follow that because of this domination, energy becomes reason. Blake makes this clear when he divides mankind into two categories, the 'Prolific', or imaginative and creative minds, and 'Devourers' or Reasoners, who take 'portions of existence' and fancy them to be the whole. The Prolific is not God, but the creative Man through whom God is manifest.

The Prolific require the Devourer, for 'the Prolific would cease to be...unless the Devourer as a sea received the excess of his delights'. Reason is like some devouring sea in which the 'delights' of existence all lose their particular identity. Further, as the concluding sentence of Plate 17 makes plain, the Prolific and the Devouring will not be reconciled. They are like natural enemies, which

religion may seek to reconcile, though Christ himself did not do so, for he continued to separate them into sheep and goats. 'Whoever tries to reconcile them seeks to destroy existence'.

Finally, Blake suggests that Satan, or the Tempter, was formerly thought to be one of the antediluvian Giants of Genesis 6, who are our Energies.

Plates 17-20 A Memorable Fancy

These four plates are the longest of the Memorable Fancies, in which Blake carries on an argument with a pompous Swedenborgian angel. As Swedenborg sought to correct misunderstandings of truth, so the pompous angel does the same. A warning is given about a 'hot burning dungeon' being prepared for Blake, and the angel shows him his "eternal lot". Their intricate journey parodies the many spiritual experiences that befell Swedenborg in his spiritual world.

The stable shelters the tame 'horses of instruction'; the church is the house of orthodox religion, leading to a vault, the tomb of dead passions. The mill is the home of sterile materialistic reasoning in which the angel resides. So there is the progression from Jesus to the New Church to Swedenborg's rational system. The mill and the cave could be the chambers of Plate 15. Heaven and Hell is not far from Blake's mind in these plates, and Swedenborg's own 'Memorable Relation' in True Christian Religion, which appears in Apocalypse Revealed, for the interpretation of the 'mill' appears several times in Arcana Caelestia, could be relevant here:

> I once heard, in the spiritual world a noise like the grinding of a mill, on the quarter towards the north. At first I wondered what it meant, until I recollected that by a mill, and by grinding, is signified, in the spiritual sense, to collect from the world, or holy scriptures,matters serviceable to doctrine; wherefore I advanced towards the place from whence the noise came ...and...observed something like an arched roof...the

entrance to which was through a cave.[24]

The Angel is so horrified by what he sees, that he climbs back into the mill, and Blake finds himself sitting alone on a pleasant bank, listening happily to a harper who sings of the man who never changed his opinion. The Angel is a little startled that Blake has escaped unharmed, but this was because the whole scene was an illusion produced by the Angel's conventional ideas. Blake now forces the angel to see his infernal perception of Swedenborg's heaven. Taking on a Swedenborgian guise, rising from the sun and dressed in white with volumes in hand, he leads the angel to the 'void between saturn & fixed stars'. The angelic vision saw them progressing from the church to the void, in Blake's perception they move from the void to the world of energy beyond it, and there discover Swedenborg's church. They enter the vault and behold a 'deep pit'. In this vision of Swedenborg's rational heaven are found grinning monkeys, representing the Devourers or reason, cannibalizing each other. In his work Heaven and Hell Swedenborg often relates to those in hell in combat with each other for supremacy; here Blake has reversed the place, heaven for hell.

In the Swedenborgian mill Blake seizes upon a skeleton which proves to be 'Aristotles Analytics', which Blake believes people impose on one another, yet the outcome of any discussion or argument is futile. So for Blake there can be no hope if one relies on Swedenborg's 'Analytics'. The only hope for progress is through contraries.

The concluding proverb is 'Opposition is true Friendship'. It should be noted that Blake deleted this from at least six copies of Marriage which may suggest the helplessness of attempting to reason with rationalists.[25] It also suggests that Swedenborgian thoughts cannot be of much use to him in his system.

Plates 21-22 Blake's critique of Swedenborg

In his final argument Blake takes Swedenborg to task. He claimed a 'new heaven' (as found in Plate 3) and he boasts that what he writes is new, but 'it is only the Contents or Index of already publish'd books'. The self-satisfied Angel resting on the results of Reasonings, which have beengathered from other writers. A man may be wiser than the monkey, but if the monkey is carried for show, then such a man can grow conceited and vain. Is this the picture Blake sees of Swedenborg?

> Thus Swedenborg's writings are a recapitulation of all superficial opinions, and an analysis of the more sublime, but no further.
>
> Have now another plain fact. Any man of mechanical talents may, from the writings of Paracelsus or Jacob Behmen, produce ten thousand volumes of equal value with Swedenborg's, and from those of Dante or Shakespear an infinite number. But when he has done this, let him not say that he knows better than his master, for he only holds a candle in sunshine.

If one can stand in a mechanical ratio to the works of other authors, who have some sense of the relationship between energy and reason, then it is possible to produce works as good as Swedenborg's, and Blake accepts this to be so. Yet it should be noted that Swedenborg was self taught in the field of theology, though his Philosopher's Notebook shows his study of the philosophers and the record he makes of their works.[26] But in his divine commission he was instructed not to read any other theology. In his reply to the letter from Dr. Beyer, he states that he has not read Law or Behmen, although many at the time reflected that they could see the influence of such writers in Swedenborg's work.

Was Blake really objecting to Swedenborg's claim of the status of God's unique revelator of spiritual truth for the new age? Certainly Swedenborg expected men to make up their own minds on what he wrote, and

it must not be simply accepted because he wrote it. For this reason he did not allow his name to appear as the author. Man had been gifted with the freedom of choice and the ability to reason for himself, for this was the great commission of the Second Advent: 'Now is it permitted to enter with the understanding into the mysteries of faith'.

To Blake's mind, Swedenborg had not paid sufficient attention to energy, and allowed everything to rest on reason. But Swedenborg did declare that 'Love is the very life of man'. He did speak with angels and spirits, good and evil, though he did not speak to a 'Devil' in the normally accepted sense, because he saw the 'Devil' as the personification of all evil, and not as a person or fallen angel. The evil could not be saved, for they had made their choice, which was hell. With fine irony Blake seeks to show that an angel can be damned, as is related to the Memorable Fancy, 'thy phantasy has imposed upon me & thou oughtest to be ashamed'.(Plate 20)

Plates 22-24 Memorable Fancy

In the Swedenborgian structure it is impossible for a devil to become an angel after death, for the 'ruling love' has fixed the final destiny. However, from time to time angels are allowed to be lowered into themselves, and they see their own evil, which by God's grace they are guarded against.

The devil's argument gives us the basis of Blake's theology. There is none greater than Jesus, so one should follow his teachings. But Jesus gave 'his sanction to the law of the ten commandments' by breaking them. Blake treated the ten commandments as the restrictive code established by the religious in order to bind man. The angel agrees that Jesus was virtue, and he must accept the devil's reversed syllogism: 'I tell you, no virtue can exist without breaking these ten

commandments'. Jesus was a man who acted on impulse, not on rules. He acted from energy, not from reason. The ten commandments may be helpful as a guide, but they are limited in their application if one acts from reason alone. True virtue is acting from energy.

The work ends with the Angel becoming the friend of the Devil, so that they are able to read the Bible together, but in 'its infernal or diabolical sense'. Hence Blake sets himself the task to write 'The Bible of Hell'. It would be difficult to accept that Blake would have the time to produce a counterbalance to all that Swedenborg had written by way of exposition of the Bible itself. However, Blake did prepare a title page. 'The Bible of Hell, in Nocturnal Visions Collected. Vol.1. Lambeth'.[27] Did he intend to gather his short Prophetic Books into one volume, using Urizen and The Book of Los as his Genesis, and the Song of Los as the continuing tale of creation, The French Revolution, America and Europe, being the historical books, and Visions of the Daughters of Albion replacing Song of Solomon, with The Marriage as his Proverbs and Ahania, which retells the Crucifixion as his New Testament, with Tiriel and Thel being literary works like Job and Ruth? On the 18th February 1826, he read to Crabb Robinson his 'Version of Genesis'.

The Song of Liberty

All copies of The Marriage of Heaven and Hell end with the three plates which carry 'The Song of Liberty'. There are twenty numbered sentences forming an apocalyptical finale to the work. Biblical apocalyptic looks forward to some time in the future, when things will change, and uses the symbols of the present to veil the prediction. Blake uses a similar device. His future points to freedom, which he loved dearly, and he sees in the present mankind manacled. It was the conventional religion that bound mankind; if that could be overthrown, then freedom was

possible. The whole theme of Marriage is an expression of Blake's endeavour to set man free. In the song itself, a summary can be found in the final words, 'For everything that lives is Holy'. Man can live when he uses his imagination, the poetic genius, for then he is one with God. 'Empire is no more'! heralds a freedom reflected in his America: A Prophecy. Revolution becomes the contrary by which progress is made. Prophecy in Blake's eyes, was not so much the prediction for the future, as the discovery afforded by the imaginative eye, which heralds a new dawn, a new age, all that was expressed by Swedenborg at the Second Advent of Christ. In the new age mankind would find a new freedom in the exercise of the truly religious, as Blake saw it, not in the conventions of religious organisations, but the activity of man's life. For Swedenborg the Last Judgment was now, and the same can be said for Blake: change was for the present, not the future. The New Jerusalem must be built among the 'dark satanic mills' of Albion.

15. Swedenborgian symbolism

Blake is the philosophical poet-painter. He sets out to challenge the ordinarily accepted ideas about religion, politics and personal life. His reactions to the central issues of religion and the nature of consciousness can be seen in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell and the early tractates All Religions are One and There is no Natural Religion. The argument in There is no Natural Religion is that of the Deist and his counter blast which reduces all to absurdity.[1] There must be more to man than his five senses: does not perception open up to the reality of "Poetic Genius" and so to the living God? In All Religions are One Blake sees true experience as that which is worth while revealing, as it does in those immortal moments - the ability to converse with God. Man must be striving beyond the diversity of this earthly life to the spiritual truth which will open up the new world, The New Jerusalem. As for The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, the philosphical core is that of the 'Proverbs of Hell'. Its target is the values of Christianity, scientific rationalism and any philosophical teaching that takes the negative attitude towards man's imaginative nature. The reader is challenged as to the values he accepts. Blake's doctrine of contraries is seen here especially in relation to reason and energy. He wants to present new truths, not 'all of the old falsehoods' of Swedenborg. But in this Blake is attacking all religions from the standpoint of their corruption of the truth. Jesus is not the revolutionary but the conservative, in the eyes of the Church, and the Old Testament is corrupted by the art of priestcraft.

Blake's central concern was always freedom, which he saw as indivisible, whether spiritual, political or personal. Symbolism was a means of expressing his inmost thoughts. Though he may satirize

Swedenborg, he did find his symbolism of use in his own thinking and expression, so that it cannot be lightly ignored. To select a word or phrase out of context, is no sure way to confirm that the origin of the idea was Blake's or another's. Blake was not averse to transforming what suited his case. But it would be equally wrong to say that none of Swedenborg's symbols found their way into Blake's thinking. Blake's symbolic images apply to the whole of man's understanding, while Swedenborg's correspondences appear to Blake to be definitions for the reasoning mind. To Blake man was understood by image and symbol, though these corresponded to man's existence. He sensed too much of a mechanical leaning in Swedenborg's use of correspondence.

In the preface to Jerusalem Blake makes the following comment:

> Every word and every letter is studied and put into its fit place; the terrific numbers are reserved for the terrific parts, the mild & gentle for the mild & gentle parts, and the prosaic for inferior parts; all are necessary to each other[2]

This suggests a purpose behind the symbolism Blake selects; and the symbols become more refined as his work proceeds. There are equally major symbols and minor ones, each holding a relationship to the series.

In practice, Blake also makes a distinction between poetry and prophecy. In the former there is the strict metrical verse, or the song or hymn; in Poetical Sketches, there is lyrical blank verse; in the prophecies, modelling himself on the Bible, Blake uses the free verse form.

In the Songs Blake takes on the role of singer; in what are called the prophecies, he becomes the orator. The prophecies proclaim the great summons to the present generation to action; but the songs are simply an invitation to sing. The symbols of the Songs are child, father, Christ, as though to express the ascending order of innocence,

experience and higher innocence. In the Songs of Innocence symbols are readily taken from the Bible; in the Songs of Experience they are often of Blake's own making, and they are carried over into the prophetical books. 'The Piper' and the 'Bard' are the symbols of introduction to each set of songs. 'The Piper'is the imaginative vision, the present innocence with a view to future experience. The 'Bard' is serious, solemn, and any recourse to innocence exists only in memory.

Acts, objects and characters can be symbolic for Blake; their value within the poetry is dependent upon their contribution to the controlling symbol. Thus, the mother of the Songs of Innocence contributes to the children as the major symbol for the state of innocence. In 'Holy Thursday' the beadle's wand is important. A rod is a symbol of sovereignty, power and rule in the traditionally accepted sense. Blake uses it to express authority and cruelty. The beadle wields his authority through the wand, and expresses for Blake the church of 'natural religion' which he so violently hates. In relation to the children, the wand becomes the symbol of restraint, not simply authority. There is the sense of restriction on the children, that they are not allowed to express their innocence. The whiteness of the wand equally suggests frigidity against the warmth of youth's exuberant innocence. Blake saw the charity children walking down the street in lines on their way to church, when he was in Lambeth. He saw them going into St. Pauls. The children parade the care of the guardians, who wish the whole world to be aware of what they are doing. Blake sees that love and compassion is lacking; the body may be cared for in a fashion, but what of the real person within? In Tiriel the staff becomes the symbol of man. Tiriel is the actor, agent, man of error; and the staff his heraldic device. In Thel the silver rod becomes the symbol of

sovereignty. Chains become symbols of bondage and oppression. As Stanley Gardner expressed it:

> Just as symbol and symbolic are, in the writing of the highest quality, related to dramatic conflict and theme, so the figures of myth and allegory are identifiable from the symbolism of their actions[3]

So for Blake every experience becomes a person. The priest in 'The Garden of Love' and the father in 'A Little Girl Lost' become symbols of bondage, the priest expressing ecclesiastical authority, while the father expresses domestic authority. In 'The Little Black Boy' the symbolic contrast becomes very striking; black and white, dirty and clean, accepted and rejected, good and bad. Blake shows in the poem how the interiors of a person are the real criterion for judgment, not the external form. This is reflective of the Swedenborgian approach, in which the interiors are the real person in the spiritual context. Blake comments on this viewpoint in relation to the church, when in the margin of Divine Love and Wisdom he writes, 'The Whole of the New Church is in the Active Life & not in Ceremonies at all'.[4]

Within his structure of symbolism, Blake also adds ambiguity. Such then becomes a challenge to the reader in his interpretation of the passage. Blake could here be seeking for the threefold sense mentioned in Swedenborg's work - celestial, spiritual and natural.[5] Or he may simply be reflecting the Bible reading in which ambiguity can also be found in the symbols used.[6] Swedenborg does say that all things have their opposite, so water may not always signify truth, as a raging flood is expressive of the power of falsity.[7]

In his use of symbols Blake appears to be aware that things in life are not always what they appear to be. To get at the heart of the matter, application is necessary. As in print, the reverse is the original image, and that must be read and understood in order to produce

the correct finishing point. Blake certainly mastered working on the reverse image in the production of his new method of printing. So this practical way saw the application of his skill both as an engraver and a poet.

The key to all of Blake's poetry is: 'God becomes as we are, that we may become as he is'.[8] Here is the concept of salvation, the reunion, and the restoration process, that divisions are overcome, self is denied, and the imaginative vision restored again. The child becomes the man, to become the spiritual child in the sight of God, since he becomes a member of God's family. Symbols enable Blake to project his thoughts, as he perceives even greater insights in the spirit.

Blake found many terms and symbols in Swedenborg's writings which he took and used in his own presentation. A number of these will now be examined, in relation to the use Blake makes of them, and in their Swedenborgian context.

STORGE

On the title page of The Four Zoas the poem is described as 'a dream'. The dreamlike qualities make us aware of the powerful psychic life which emotion and imagination can bring to our mind. Biblical association are at the heart of Blake's thought, the zoas are mentioned in Revelation 4.6 and the four elements are based on the vision of Ezekiel 1.4-28, in which Blake sets the fundamentals by the New Testament references which appear at the opening of the poem. It is in this poem that we find reference to 'Love of Parent., Storgous Appetite' (K.308). Here Blake is closer to Swedenborgian usage than in the case of the use of the word

storge in Milton 34.20. It is not a substitute word, as in Milton, 'The River Storge (which is Arnon).' In context it could be suggestive of the River Styx of mythology. In The Four Zoasthere is something of the flavour of Swedenborg's use of this term.

Storge is a Greek word which Swedenborg uses in Conjugial Love 385 in relation to the love of children. This was the general use of the word in the world at that time, what might be termed 'parental love'. Such love is present with parents who love their children, and have little love for one another. But in context of the Conjugial Love passage Swedenborg is using the word to express something of the conjugial which partners have for each other, and subsequently the love of children, storge, which is conjoined to it. Swedenborg also states that the love of children remains with women, not only when the children have left home, but in death itself. Indeed, he states that children who die in childhood are brought up in the spiritual world by such mother angels, who in their earthly life greatly loved children, and 'as many infants are consigned to them, as they desire from spiritual storge' Conjugial Love(410).

In his copy of Heaven and Hell, Blake marked, without annotation, certain passages relating to children (numbers 333 and 334). In Heaven and Hell 334 reference is made to the education of children in heaven. Blake also places his typical dagger mark at the side of paragraph 513, which relates to instruction in the spiritual world, with the Blakean note, 'see No 73 Worlds in Universe for account of Instructing Spirits'.

In Heaven and Hell mention is made of storge. Was it this reference, rather than the reference to the word in Conjugial Love that was in Blake's mind in the use of the term storge? He had a copy of

Heaven and Hell. If he had a copy of Conjugial Love, this has yet to come to light. Conjugial Love was translated into English by the Rev. John Clowes in 1794.

The Rev. John Clowes also translated the True Christian Religion in 1781. Although Blake's copy of this work is not extant, he makes reference to it in the Descriptive Catalogue Number VIII. 'The spiritual Preceptor, an experiment. . Picture'. This would imply that he possessed a copy or had ready access to one. In True Christian Religion mention is made of storge, in paragraph 304, with reference to the state of peace;

> It may also be likened to recreation of the mind, and rest after heavy toil; and the consolation mothers feel after they have brought forth, when their mother love (storge) begins to manifest its delights.

So this paragraph could confirm what Blake had read in Heaven and Hell. Further, if Blake ever attended the Theosophical Society, then the subject would no doubt have come up for discussion. It was a subject that interested Blake, the parental love for children, as is reflected in many of his Songs. Being childless, yet with this deep concern for children, the word and association of storge would have a particular appeal to him. Hence the use he makes of the Swedenborgian usage in The Four Zoas.

NEW CHURCH CANON

In plate 48 of Jerusalem man has fallen to his lowest depths. Albion's last words are 'Hope is banish'd from me'; the Saviour then receives him in mercy and places him on the Rock of Ages. This action is recorded in plate 48, where hope is offered through the eternal Word.

> In silence the Divine Lord builded with immortal labour,
> Of gold & jewels, a sublime Ornament, a Couch of repose
> With Sixteen pillars, canopied with emblems & written

verse,
Spiritual Verse, order'd & measur'd: from whence time shall reveal
The Five books of the Decalogue: the books of Joshua & Judges,
Samuel, a double book, & Kings, a double book, the Psalms & Prophets,
The Four-fold Gospel, and the 'Revelations everlasting.
Eternity groan'd & was troubled at the image of Eternal Death!

Damon was the first to note that the books of the Bible cited by Blake, thirty-three in all, are precisely those books which Swedenborg declares to hold a spiritual sense.[1] Bentley comments that at the First General Conference, among the propositions affirmed were the 'Books of the Word'.[2] So it can be no coincidence that Blake chooses these books to form the canopy that would protect the sleeping body of man until the time of redemption took place.

Although Damon cites a passage from Arcana Caelestia, the number cited is towards the close of the volume, and it would require Blake to purchase the volume in which the number is cited, published in 1800, which was at the time when he had turned from Swedenborg, with his publication of The Marriage of Heaven and Hell.[3] The comment of Bentley is the more plausible, since the propositions spelt out in full the books which composed the Word.[4]

Swedenborg's definition of the contents of the Word, or Sacred Scriptures, are those books of the Bible which contain a continuous spiritual sense. This sense he states to be:

> that which shines forth from the literal sense, while one is searching and explaining the Word to confirm some dogma of the church; this sense may be called the literal sense of the Word. But the spiritual sense does not appear in the literal sense, it is interiorly within.[5]

This interior sense is continuous in those books which form the Word.

other books in the Bible, like the Book of Job, contain a spiritual

sense, but it is broken and not continuous, therefore it is not a part of the Word. Blake must have found this idea compelling, and he uses it in Jerusalem, citing the thirty-three books he found in the invitation document to the First General Conference.

CORRESPONDENCES

Blake was an avid reader of the Bible and readily accepted the symbolism to be found in the Old Testament. Yet, he did not exploit it to the full. He did some watercolours for Butts.[1] But he may have found difficulty in adapting what he read to his own expression of spiritual experience and revolutionary ideas. The nearest he comes to expressing his feelings is in the Designs for the Book of Job, which he knew was not a book of Swedenborg's Word. Much of the mythological cosmogony he derived from Milton, and his language is much like that of Bunyan. These for him stood for faith against rationalistic questioning. Faith for Blake implied something of spiritual light. The evangelical fervour of men like Wesley and Whitefield found expression in language of symbolic truth.

Swedenborg could give precise definition, structure and expression to symbolic truth, but the Arcana Caelestia, which contains much of this source material, does not appear to be well used by Blake. It could be that written in Latin it was not freely open to Blake for perusal.[2] Or what is more probable, the depth of spiritual insight in the work was so complex that Blake had difficulty in finding artistic expression for the thoughts to be found there. Certainly he was aware of Swedenborgian terminology associated with the understanding of the Bible. Correspondences he readily uses, both in verse and drawing. He

writes:

> It ought to be understood that Persons, Moses & Abraham, are not here meant, but the State signified by those names, the Individuals being representatives or Visions of those States[3]

Two things are to be noted here: firstly the Swedenborgian style,[4] in which the spiritual meaning is expressed, such as,

> Genesis 10.1. And these are the generations of the sons of Noah - Shem, Ham, and Japheth; and sons were born to them after the flood. 'These are the generations of the sons of Noah' means derivative matters of doctrine and derivative forms of worship in the Ancient Church, which in general is Noah. 'Shem, Ham, and Japheth' - Shem true internal worship, Ham corrupted internal worship, Japheth external worship corresponding to internal.

Secondly, Blake appears to be aware of the difference between representatives and significatives in Swedenborg's terminology. This he could have gathered from his own reading of Swedenborg, or in discussion with Sharp or Flaxman. Words are said to signify, persons represent, and things of nature correspond. For instance:

> 'Tree' means perception, 'trees desirable to the sight' the perception of what is true, 'trees good for good' the perception of what is good, 'tree of life' love and faith deriving from love, 'the tree of the knowledge of good and evil' faith derived from sensory evidence, that is, from knowledge (reference Gen.2.9) Arcana Calestia 102
>
> 'Israel' means the internal spiritual church, 'Jacob' the external features of the same Church. (reference Gen.1:9-10 Arcana Calestia 1025).

In A Vision of the Last Judgment Blake appears to use Swedenborgian terminology:

> As Poetry admits not a Letter that is Insignificant, so Painting admits not a Grain of Sand or a Blade of Grass Insignificant - much less an Insignificant Blur or Mark.[5]

At the conclusion of this extract, is Blake making reference to the Hebrew 'jot' and 'tittle'?

IJIM

Ijim is a Hebrew plural which Blake uses in a singular form. The word, and its associated tziim, is found in the prophets (Isaiah 13.21, Jeremiah 50.39 and Psalms 74.14), and suggests some form of desert dweller or creature that howls. In The Four Zoas viii 360 Ijim is the eighteenth son of Los; in Tiriel iv 11 and 21, he is the son of Har. Ijim encounters a lion, a tiger, a river torrent, a thunder cloud, a serpent; 'then like a toad or like a newt would whisper in my ears' (Tiriel iv 59). He dwells in the woods (Tiriel iv 4 and 90) the forest of errors. As the son of Har (self love), he interprets anything in his way as an enemy.

Although the word has Old Testament connections, Northrop Frye is no doubt correct when he says that Blake probably found the word in Swedenborg. In True Christian Religion there is a most revealing paragraph which gives striking allusions to the use Blake makes of the word. The opposite to Divine Love is 'self love':

> This love is the reason why its desires in hell, where it is sovereign, look at a distance like various kind of wild beasts; some like foxes and leopards, some like wolves and tigers, some like crocodiles and poisonous snakes. The deserts where they live consist of nothing but piles of stones or bare gravel, interspersed with marshes full of croaking frogs. Mournful birds swoop over their huts wailing. These are the ochim, tziim and iyim mentioned in the prophetic books of the Word which describe the love of domination arising from self love (Isaiah 13.21; Jeremiah 50.39; Psalms 74.14).[1]

Ochim, tziim and ijim are translated in the King James Version as 'doleful creatures', 'owls' and 'satyrs'. Swedenborg states that these are a part of man's nature corresponding to that part of the character which Blake represented by Tiriel. If self love is hatred, it will end in self hatred, and Swedenborg states that self love destroys itself. 'Self love in itself regarded is the love that rules in hell, and which

produces hell in man".[2]

ULRO

Blake uses the term to express the material world.[1] In the astronomical universe "that false appearance which appears to the reasoner as of a Globe rolling thro' Voidness, it is a delusion of Ulro'.[2] If there is the hint here of the ultimate, the last things, then Blake could be reflecting the use of the word and its concept in Swedenborg. The word appears often in Divine Love and Wisdom, which Blake read in much detail. 'The ultimate, or last things, are all things of the mineral kingdom'.[3]

THE MORTAL PART

Blake understands his perspective of Jesus, the Divine Human, from his reading of Swedenborg. The part that Mary played in the incarnation is far removed from the idea of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary. Mary is the means by which Jesus Christ took on sin. She is the 'mortal' part, which suggests frailty and weakness. It was necessary for Jesus to take on this frail human, in order to take on the human from the Divine within him. As it is expressed in Doctrine of the Lord 35, the natural humanity inherited by Jesus Christ from his earthly mother,

> cannot be transmuted into the Divine Essence nor, can it be commixed with it...thus it follows that the Lord put off the human from the mother which, in itself, was like the human of another man, and thus material, and put on the human from the Father, which, in itself, was like His Divine, and thus substantial; and from which the Human also was made.

Blake spells this out in the words:

> He took on Sin in the Virgin's Womb,
> And put it off on the Cross and Tomb[1]

The mortal part, Blake sees in himself:

> Thou, Mother of my Mortal part,
> With cruelty didst mould my Heart[2]

And he uses the phrase to express the infirmity in mankind. This infirmity is put off as the spiritual man takes on reality. And the progressive states of the human soul moves from one to the other towards its angelic goal.

THE GRAND MAN

The divine human for Blake embodies Jesus Christ as the Divine Image, which is the quintessence of his prophetic message:

> For Mercy has a human heart
> Pity, a human face.[1]

There is no one image or face of God, but an infinity of images. As Swedenborg states:

> not one face exists in the whole world which is the same as another, neither can exist in all eternity[2]

The concept of the Grand Man envisages for Swedenborg the whole inhabitants of heaven. All individuals, as Societies of individuals, form the One Man of heaven, who is over and against the Divine. 'The Lord leads all in the universal heaven as if they were one angel'.[3] A whole society may appear as one angel;[4] 'when at a distance it appears as one, and on its approach, as a multitude'[5] is Blake's expression of this image in A Vision of the Last Judgment. He further uses the image of the Grand Man in The Four Zoas,

> Then those in Great Eternity met in the Council of God
> As one Man, for contracting their Exalted Senses
> They behold Multitude, or expanding they behold as one,
> As One Man all the Universal family; & that One Man
> They call Jesus the Christ[6]

THE DIVINE HUMANITY

'Jesus only' is the motto Blake gives to Jerusalem, and he calls mankind to accept his conviction that Jesus is the 'Universal Humanity'. Jesus is the Imagination, the creative spiritual power.

> All Things are comprehended in their Eternal Forms in the divine body of the Saviour, the True Vine of Eternity, The Human Imagination.[1]

'The human form divine' is not the natural body, but the spiritual form of man's human nature. So the Divine Human is not contained in space, but rather contains all things in itself. Swedenborg writes:

> His human body cannot be thought of as great or small, or of any stature, because this also attributes space, and hence He is the same in first things as the last and in the greatest things and the least; and moreover the Human is the innermost of every created thing, but apart from space.[2]

And as Blake expresses it:

> God Appears & God is Light
> To those poor Souls which dwell in Night,
> But does a Human Form Display
> To those who dwell in Realms of day.[3]

In 'The Divine Image' Blake expresses the qualities he expects to see in the Divine Humanity:

> For Mercy has the human heart
> Pity, the human face
> And Love the human form divine
> And Peace, the human dress.

'In all the heavens there is no other idea of God than the idea of a man'.[4] The universe contains the Divine Humanity, so that the more man learns about God in human form, the more will he learn about the universe God has created. Since God is knowable only in human terms he must therefore be seen to possess human attributes:

> that God could not have created the universe and all things thereof, unless He were a Man, may be clearly comprehended...from this ground... in God there is love

> and wisdom, there is mercy and clemency, and also that there is Absolute Goodness and Truth, because these things are from Him.[5]

Swedenborg further states that 'in all forms and uses there is a certain image of man',[6] and that 'God is very Man, from whom every Man is a man according to his reception of love and wisdom'.[7]

To Blake, the Divine Humanity was central to all life, thought and love:

> ...the Divine Humanity who is the Only General and Universal Form
> To which all Lineaments tend & seek with love & sympathy[8]

16. Blake's ambivalence

Can a leopard change his spots? Can a man truly change? When his opinion is altered, does he change as a consequence? The lapsed Catholic does not think like a Protestant. Changes within the mind are not always matched with changes round about or in the world in general. Pressures in the world may exert an influence on a person, but do they radically change the person mentally or spiritually? Would Blake therefore change as a result of his contact with Swedenborgians? Dr. Wilkinson reports that C.A. Tulk had told him that Blake had two states of mind over Swedenborg:

> Blake informed Tulk that he had two different states; one in which he liked Swedenborg's writings, and one in which he disliked them. The second was a state of pride in himself, and then they were distasteful to him, but afterwards he knew that he had not been wise and sane. The first was a state of humility, in which he received and accepted Swedenborg.[1]

Although this is a comment which comes through several hands, and some critics think it is a piece of Swedenborgian propaganda,[2] it should be noted that at the time Blake was virtually an unknown poet and painter; he certainly had not the standing he holds today in literary or artistic circles. But it does show that Blake was no slave to any system except his own. In the final analysis he determined for himself what his opinion should be, even though ironically he did expect others to change their opinions in favour of his own.

> So the Angel said "thy phantasy has imposed upon me, & thou oughtest to be ashamed'.
> I answer'd: "we impose on one another, & it is but lost time to converse with you whose works are only Analytics".[3]

In his relationship with Swedenborgians, and in his reading and comment on the Writings of Swedenborg, a number of salient points are

revealed. He was never a practising churchman, and so was not drawn to services of worship and rituals associated with them. The founders of the New Jerusalem Church appeared to be obsessed with the very matters which Blake abhorred: priesthood, hymn books, prayer books, rituals. So it is not difficult to see him breaking away from the new found Church body. He declared in his annotation to Divine Love and Wisdom, No. 220: 'The Whole of the New Church is in the active Life & Not in Ceremonies at all'. He may have attended the First General Conference of the New Church in April 1789, with his wife Catherine, but that appears to have been the only recorded contact. Mention is made of the missionary minister, the Rev. Joseph Proud, seeking to persuade Blake to become a member of his church, but there is no evidence that he did so. His friend John Flaxman was a member of the Church Committee, at the Temple in Cross Street, Hatton Garden , during the ministry of the Rev. Joseph Proud.

If Blake did not wish for formal membership of the New Church organisation, because he was not enthusiastic over the direction the leaders of the Church were taking, what were his feelings towards the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg? Blake's interest can be traced from his attendance at the First General Conference in 1789, and a little before in his association with Swedenborgian readers who were his friends, like William Sharp and John Flaxman, to the time of his painting a Swedenborgian subject which he exhibited in 1809. In his comments on that painting, which appear in the Descriptive Catalogue, he gives unhesitating praise to Swedenborg:

> This subject is taken from the Visions of Emanuel Swedenborg, Universal Theology, No. 623 ... The works of this visionary are well worthy the attention of Painters, and Poets; they are foundations for grand things[4]

Henry Crabb Robinson reports that in a conversation he had with Blake on the 10th December 1825, Blake said of Swedenborg: 'He was a divine teacher - he had done much good'.[5] Thus for at least half a century Blake had an interest in Swedenborg, in comment and observation, either positive or negative. When he attacks Swedenborg for an error he sees in his books, he does so fiercely because he admires him so much.

Blake's ambivalence can be seen to fall naturally into three periods, and changes can be accounted for not only in the changing states of his mind, and the world around him, but in the changes taking place within the New Church organisation itself.

1st period - up to 1789

During his apprenticeship days Blake was friendly with William Sharp who at the time was an active Swedenborgian. From his youth Blake had read widely, in the fields of the mystics, English Literature and philosophy. In an annotation to Sir Joshua Reynolds's Discourse, he writes:

> I read Burke's Treatise when very Young; at the same time I read Locke on Human Understanding & Bacon's Advancement of Learning: on Every one of these books I wrote my Opinions[6]

His skills proved that he was entitled to a scholarship at the Royal Academy. He made friends with the painter Thomas Stothard and the sculptor John Flaxman. Flaxman was himself a Swedenborgian. In a marginal note to Watson's Apology for the Bible Blake wrote,

> 'No man can change his Principles. Every man changes his opinions'[7]

There was no virtue to opinion. The reading of Swedenborg in this period did not change Blake's principles, but it certainly challenged his opinions. But being his own man, Blake would not be a slave to another man's opinions or principles.

During this period John Flaxman sought commissions for Blake.

Blake subscribed to Jacob Duché's Discourses on Several Subjects. Duche held to Swedenborgian ideas, and Blake may well have attended one of his evening meetings with his friend Flaxman or William Sharp. Sharp was associated with Thomas, Duché's son, and he helped in the production of Duché's book. The second hand copy of Swedenborg's Heaven and Hell may well have been in Blake's library at this time. He made a few annotations to his copy. In 1789 he attended the First General Conference of the New Church. A concern dear to Blake's heart was that of slavery, and some of the early readers of Swedenborg had similar interests. In Norrkoping in 1779 there was a Swedenborgian Abolishionist Society. Members of that body, Wadstrom and Nordenskjold, attended the First General Conference. It was the hope of these two gentlemen that a free society, based on New Church teachings and principles, might be established in Africa. They sought support for their scheme from Swedenborgians in London.

Blake did not follow blindly the thoughts of others, but he would use them to measure his own thinking and direction. 'Under every Good is a hell, i.e. hell is the outward or external form of heaven & is the body of the lord'.[8] Blake is here pushing the idea found in Swedenborg to its extreme. His comments become his own elucidation of Swedenborg's Writing.

> There are .... hells beneath hells .... the whole heaven and the whole world of spirits, are as it were excavated beneath, and under them is a continuous hell. [9]

So for Blake, if the unity exists, hell is just another form of heaven. Hell, then, becomes not merely negative, but admits of redemption.

In his marginalia to Divine Love and Wisdom, Blake seeks agreement with Swedenborg and endeavours to reason away any differences. Swedenborg makes a distinction of discrete degrees between the

spiritual and the natural, heaven and hell: Blake cannot accept this, for his seeks a unity. 'Poetic Genius', as perceived by imagination, is the unifying element. So Blake uses Swedenborgian statements as metaphor, by his application of Poetic Genius. If 'The Negation of God constitutes Hell', as Swedenborg claimed, Blake can see God from the standpoint of Poetic Genius as the manifestation of the indwelling imagination. Swedenborg may draw a strong distinction between the natural and the spiritual world, 'so distinct that they have nothing in common with each other", except through corespondences.[10] But Blake notes that this viewpoint is through the eyes of the natural man only. If man's mind were illuminated by the light of the spirit, this would not be the case. He goes so far as to say that the ancients had a greater capacity for spiritual vision than men of the present day. Here he is sharing with Swedenborg the idea of the wisdom of the ancients and their knowledge of correspondences.[11]

When Swedenborg speaks of the universe having two suns, a living one in the spiritual world, and a dead one in this world, Blake objects and states:

> How could life create death...the dead Sun is only a phantasy of evil man[12]

Swedenborg denies that there is a portion of divinity in man, although man has a soul, for if this were the case, anything Divine in them, 'would not be beloved by others, but it would love itself'.[13] Blake is prepared to concede that it might well be only a question of semantics: 'Perhaps we only differ in the meaning of the words Infinity & Eternal', as he records in his annotation of Divine Love and Wisdom, No.49.

To Swedenborg the two worlds, spiritual and natural, are discrete but connected through correspondence, and in his desire to

synthesise, Blake both agrees with and contradicts Swedenborg. He can agree with enthusiasm on the matter of correspondence and influx, since the subject is love. Then Blake seeks to assimilate Swedenborg's doctrine with his own. He freely borrows from Swedenborg's system of correspondence in Songs. For instance, in the theme of the 'Proprium' in 'The Clod and the Pebble', with the Pebble's view of 'Love seeketh only Self to please', which is the attitude of the Proprium (this was a term given by John Clowes in his translation to the state of man's separation from God, that is, man in himself and separated from the Divine Influence). Self love is self destructive, and that power the Proprium holds. Similarly in 'The Human Abstract' Blake shows the power of destructive self love, following the viewpoint of Swedenborg:

> And mutual fears bring peace;
> Till the selfish loves increase.
> Then Cruelty knits a snare,
> And spreads his baits with care.

As Swedenborg states:

> In Proportion as Self-love increased, in the same Proportion all kinds of Evil, as Enmity, Revenge, Cruelty, and Deceit increased wth it [14]

The Africans have a direct intuition of the Divine Humanity, as Swedenborg states, and see the manifestation of God in human form and not as the idea of a vapour. Blake's approach in 'The Little Black Boy' shows the African in the correct relationship with God, that might well have been expected of the little white boy.

This was a period when Blake finds much in Swedenborg to thrill him, even if at times he finds contradictions to his own thinking. As Mark Schorer expressed it:

> The striking fact about his use of Swedenborg is that he derived..the materials for his myths from the dogma he rejected [15]

Here was a visionary who could challenge him, and in that action he

found his own ideas being strengthened. In his 'Garden of Love" a sign is placed over the door to the Chapel, 'Thou shalt not'. Here is the negation to be found in much of Christianity: and Blake had read over the door to the East Cheap Chapel where the First General Conference of the New Church was held, 'Nunc Licet' (Now it is allowable).[16] Here was the invitation and the challenge Blake readily accepted, for it was a bolder step than any being taken by the Establishment.

Swedenborg has a description of Hell, which is nothing like the scenery of heaven:

> **Wherefore** amongst the inhabitants of Hell, particularly in their Deserts, there appear Birds of Night as Bats, and Owls, and likewise Wolves, Leopards, Tigers, Rats, and Mice, with venomous serpents of all kinds, as Dragons and Crocodiles.[17]

Here are correspondential images of self love and thought, as found in hell, but Blake uses these images to express states within men, in the movement from innocence to experience. In 'The Little Girl Lost" and "The Little Girl Found", 'Lovely Lyca" wanders through the landscape of innocence, "hearing wild bird songs", before she becomes lost in a 'desert' at night and falls asleep; it is then that 'the beasts of prey' come out from their 'caverns deep", and she is surrounded by lions, leopards and tigers which carry her naked to their caves. Swedenborg would see this movement as the fall from heaven to hell, but Blake seeks it as the discovery by experience. So the parents find Lyca safe, for the lion is really 'a spirit arm'd in gold" and their daughter is indeed safe 'among the tigers wild'. For Blake the good and evil both become good as the 'Contraries Married':

> To this day they dwell
> In a lonely dell
> Nor feel the wolvish howl,
> Nor the lions growl.[18]

2nd Period - 1789-1793

In April 1789 Blake, along with his wife, attended the First General Conference of the New Church. Here he was to see the Swedenborgians in action. He had read something of Swedenborg, shown interest in what he read, and become associated with a number of Swedenborgians. The General Conference was to herald a 'New Age' - visible confirmation of the 'New Age' that began at the time of Blake's birth, within Swedenborg's reckoning of things. Even if there had been challenge to the 'spiritual teacher', Blake was no doubt on a high as he attended the Conference.

What he saw in the East Cheap Chapel was not a new world order, but the declaration of a new institution which in outward appearance would be little different from what he had seen in other ecclesiastical organisations. This was not what Blake desired or wanted. So Blake's The Marriage of Heaven and Hell begins to take shape. He becomes more disillusioned with Swedenborg; he had written not new truths but the old falsehoods in a new guise.[19]

He read Divine Providence, newly translated, along with the Preface, which he declared to be the work of priestcraft, and the whole work itself one of predestination. Thus there is a rapid cooling towards Swedenborg. In order to uphold his case, Blake must become hostile towards Swedenborg. He declares: 'What is Enrolling but Predestination'.[20] In Swedenborg's eyes God intended all men to go to heaven, but some chose to go to hell. Swedenborg further states that success in this world does not mean success in the world to come; worldly men may bring hell upon themselves despite their success in the world. If Blake thinks Swedenborg is seeking an escape clause in the work, he damns it by saying Swedenborg is speaking of 'Spiritual

Predestination', so he is no better than Calvin.[21] Joseph Priestly, a Unitarian minister, never accused Swedenborg of being a Predestinarian, he rather saw him as opposing the doctrine of Calvin, for like Swedenborg he could not accept that there was ever anything vindictive in God's justice.[22]

At this time Revolution was in the air: three months after the General Conference the French Revoluton occurred. Was this a sign of the 'Second Coming', beginning of the 'New Age'? Blake himself was a revolutionary at heart. He found his Swedenborgian friends speaking out against revolution. At the General Conference of 1792 Hindmarsh states:

> a Protest was entered in the Minutes...against all such principles of infidelity and democracy as were then circulating in this country.[23]

Thomas Paine was specifically mentioned: Blake thought highly of Paine's work. In Birmingham the Church-and-King mob destroyed Priestley's Unitarian Chapel, and then went on to the newly built Swedenborgian Temple. The minister, the Rev. Joseph Proud told the mob:

> the minister and worshippers were not Unitarians, nor inimical to the Government.[24]

On hearing this the mob shouted, 'New Jerusalem for ever'.

Did Blake feel the Swedenborgians were letting the populace down, so that they were no better than the Establishment? Certainly, in Marriage Wesley and Whitefield have a place, reflecting, no doubt in Blake's mind, their concern for the poor. Further, Conference itself was moving more into line with the Establishment with its concern for services of worship, prayer books, hymn books and vestments for the clergy. What Blake could not stand in the Establishment, the infant New Church was anxious to take to itself.

Another aspect of New Church life was that of Concubinage. Men like Nordenskjöld proposed that men should be allowed to take a

mistress, or a concubine, if they found that their sexual urges were too strong for their partner. Also if men should marry someone outside the faith, concubinage could be accepted. The Swedenborg work, Conjugial Love, was only available in Latin, and it contained a section on the 'legitimate causes' of concubinage, as it did for divorce. These would be physical, mental or moral, including the differences of faith, disease, madness and adultery.[25] 'That they, who from causes legitimate, just, and really conscientious, are engaged in this concubinage, may be principled at the same time in conjugial love'.[26] In Swedenborg's eyes this was allowed in order to preserve the conjugial state of the individuals. It was not to be the rule of marriage. A group was expelled from the East Cheap Society because of the stand they took on this matter. Did Blake agree with them, and so strengthen his stand against Swedenborg and the Swedenborgians? Certainly Blake would be aware of what was going on at the time; the action was such that pages were torn from the Minute Book. Sibley records it as follows:

> a very sorrowful occurrence befell the infant New Church, whereby the flood-gates of immorality were in danger of being thrown open to her inevitable destruction. The Church held many solemn meetings on the occasion, which ended in her withdrawing herself from six of her members, viz. Robert Hindmarsh, Henry Servante, Charles Berns Wadström, Augustus Nordenskjöld, George Robinson and Alexander Wilderspin.[27]

Did Blake think the Committee of East Cheap Chapel had small minds? Did he sense that liberty was to be surrendered for the sake of respectability?

Another matter which again could have added to Blake's disillusion with the New Church, its followers, and especially its spiritual leader, was the incident of Swedenborg's skull. The incident was recorded in The Times, so Blake would be aware of the matter, and since he was interested in phrenology at the time, would no doubt

discuss the matter with his Swedenborgian friends, and maybe view the skull itself, since it was in the hands of his friend Charles Tulk.

In 1817 an impoverished Swedish merchant captain named Ludwig Granholm removed the skull from Swedenborg's coffin in the vault of the Swedish church in London. Maybe he thought he could sell it to a wealthy Swedenborgian. In 1819, on his death bed, Granholm confessed his theft to the pastor of the Swedish Church, J.P. Wahlin, and the skull was restored to him. The pastor reported the matter to his Church Council, but he did not return it to the coffin, but entrusted it to Tulk. Tulk showed it to John Flaxman. J.J. Garth Wilkinson records the incident as follows:

> Flaxman examined the skull of Swedenborg at Mr. Charles A. Tulk's in the presence of Mr. Clowes and Mr. Glover, and he said: 'How beautiful the form-how undulating the line here; here's no deficiency, Mr. Clowes. Smiling he said: "Why, I should almost take it for a female head, were it not for the peculiar character of the forehead". On the question of whether a cast should be taken, Mr. Flaxman observed 'that the skull was worthy of it for its mere beauty'.[28]

The above is an account of the opening of the coffin in 1817, but there is another record of an opening in 1790. Gustav Broling, a Swedish metallurgist stated that an American physician was interested in seeing Swedenborg's coffin. He believed that the body had been removed in an extraordinary manner. With the help of Broling and several Swedenborgians, or 'New Jerusalemites', the American entered the vault. On opening the casket they found an inner lead coffin, opening this they found much of the remains of Swedenborg still in the coffin. The account was recorded in The Times for 24th April 1823 by J.I. Hawkins:

> About the year 1790, a Swedish philosopher, then in London, who was an admirer of Swedenborg's philosophical writings but had no relish for the theological, became acquainted with some members of the New Church, and warmly opposed Swedenborg's tenet that the soul takes a final leave of the material body at death, and enters a

> new scene of superior activity in a spiritual body, more suited to obey its energies. The learned Swede endeavoured to persuade them, that all great philosophers had, by virtue of their profound wisdom, the power of taking with them, into the world of spirits, their natural bodies; and he asserted his full conviction, that Swedenborg, whom he considered one of the first philosophers, had taken away his body from the coffin.[29]

If Swedenborg was the man he said he was, then maybe Blake expected something dramatic to have taken place. But it was not so, for Swedenborg's body equally fell from 'ashes to ashes, and dust to dust'. There was no Christ-like empty tomb.

3rd Period - 1793-1826

The Marriage of Heaven and Hell was completed in 1793 by Blake, and it marks his leave of Swedenborg and the Swedenborgians. But in the 1800's a number of Swedenborgian concepts and references do begin to reappear in his work.

In Marriage, although there are many references to Swedenborg, all of them take a negative position. Certainly Blake does not deny he was born at the beginning of the 'new age', the dating of the Last Judgment and the Second Advent within Swedenborg's teaching being the year in which he was born. Yet there is the feeling he has outgrown the Swedenborg influence. Now he wishes to establish his own approach, and Marriage is the cut off point. Still certain ideas and thoughts remain, and he calls on these as he makes his own expression. For example, in The Four Zoas, begun in 1796 and completed in 1804, mention is made of the term 'vortex'.[30] Everything has its own vortex. Through experience man learns and this experiential movement is the individual vortex of change, movement and evolving. It reflects the suggestion made by Descartes that the vortices moved in space and produced the sun and stars. Change, development and growth are envisaged for Blake, but is

the idea in his mind that of Descartes or Swedenborg? In the New Jerusalem Magazine, 1790 Chastanier translated sections from Swedenborg's Spiritual Diary and the extracts hold similarities to the comments Blake uses, especially when seen in the expanded comment in Milton 15.12-17:

> The nature of infinity is this: That every thing has its
> Own Vortex, and when once a traveller thro' Eternity
> Has pass'd that Vortex, he percieves it roll backward behind
> His path, into a globe itself infolding like a sun,
> Or like a moon, or like a universe of starry majesty,
> While he keeps onwards in his wondrous journey on the earth,

Chastanier's translation runs as follows:

> There first appears a folding-up, as it were, of a veil round the head, at a certain distance: by the Angel's whirling about, the veil is flying up, even as I have seen it somewhere represented in some pictures. Presently the folding up becomes swifter and swifter, until the whole veil appears upwards; but by his swift whirling about there appears as a sphere of an horizontal winding, such as is the sphere of the circulating atmosphere, and that went from right to left...The veil thus formed into such a sphere, another that stood close by him, took hold of it, as it were; then the sphere of the veil unfolded itself in a contrary direction, so that it was unfolded from the veil, and was lessened; yet it lasted pretty long from the peripheries to the central place where he stood; and while it came close by him, he fell backwards into a black pool, very filthy, until the Lord delivered him from thence (page 18).

In Milton Blake also appears to show clearly his own ambivalence towards Swedenborg. He comments:

> They perverted Swedenborg's Vision in Beulah & in Ulro[31]

which would suggest that Blake's sympathy is with Swedenborg, and the way his writings have been treated. A little further on, in the same section, he writes;

> O Swedenborg! Strongest of men, the Samson shorn by the Churches.[32]

This may hint at a misuse of Swedenborg's writings by the Churches, with the power to cut him down like Samson. But this is in contrast to the

comment Blake makes in Marriage, when Swedenborg and his writings are portrayed as someone who 'carried a monkey about for shew'. Now he is a strong man. Further, in this same section, Blake is hinting at 'churches' or 'periods in history', along similar lines to Swedenborg's usage, with biblical names and personages in history to express a system of development. Mention of Swedenborg shows Blake's acceptance of the New Church, even though he is critical of him for his repressive laws and the re-affirming of the afterlife in rewards and punishments. Yet for all that, as the section goes on to state, it is 'Whitefield & Wesley' who are the prophets not Swedenborg.

Descriptive Catalogue, prepared by Blake in 1809 to mark his exhibition at '. 28 Corner of Broad Street, Golden Square' contains a reference to a painting entitled 'The spiritual Preceptor, an experiment Picture'. The picture is now lost, but it is based on Swedenborg's Universal Theology No. 623. Universal Theology was the sub-title of the work commonly called The True Christian Religion, which the Rev. John Clowes translated and published in 1781. In the body of the comments on the painting, Blake writes:

> The works of this visionary are well worthy the attention of Painters and Poets; they are foundations for grand things.[33]

Although Blake commends Swedenborg to other artists and writers, his interpretation of the passage in True Christian Religion is different from that of Swedenborg's text. A group of children and their teacher see a group of men ascend to heaven, they appear from a distance as calves; but when they descend they appear as dead horses. Blake says that the men who ascended did so through their learning and therefore were repelled. They erred 'by placing Learning above Inspiration'. In the Swedenborg text the teacher offers the following

explanation, which is different from the Blakean notion of poetic inspiration. The men were thinking 'materially' of heaven, not 'spiritually'. Heaven was then seen as a place rather than the expression of love and wisdom: that is why they were rejected and appeared as dead horses. The teacher then goes on to state:

> Everyone who reverently reads the Word thinks inwardly about God, the neighbour and heaven,...Anyone who thinks about God only as a Person and not as Essence thinks materially; and so does anyone who thinks about the neighbour merely as an external form, without regard to the sort of person he is. If anyone thinks of heaven merely as a place, instead of as love and wisdom, which are what makes it heaven, he too is thinking materially.

Blake is still not reconciled to Swedenborg's rational approach to his spiritual visions, even though he is commending others to read him because 'they are the foundation for grand things'.

Swedenborg states that the Ancient Word is to be found in Great Tartary. In Jerusalem Blake makes reference to Urizen building his 'Mighty Temple' in 'his inmost hall in Great Tartary'.[34] This is generally thought to be a reference to Tartary of the Crimea, with Napoleon's army advancing into Russia, being the 'Winding worm on the Deserts of Great Tartary'.[35] But in fact the reference is to the Asiatic Tartary. In True Christian Religion Swedenborg states that the Ancient Word is to be found in Asia, and this Word preceded the Israelitish Word. He states: 'It is still preserved amongst the Peoples who live in Great Tartary".[36] These peoples also posess the 'Book of Jasher', mentioned in Joshua X 12,13 an II Samuel 1.17.18, as well as the Book of the 'Wars of Jehovah' (Numbers 21.14,15). These are books of the Ancient Word, with the beginnings of Genesis having been compiled from information found in that Word, according to Swedenborg. So for Blake the "inmost' hall of Urizen in Great Tartary expresses the primordial Word with its ancient wisdom.

Blake told Henry Crabb Robinson that he had seen the Spiritual Sun on Primrose Hill.[37] Was he here alluding to the Swedenborgian account recorded in the Divine Love and Wisdom, of the two suns, spiritual and natural? His ambivalence towards Swedenborg is seen in the position Blake gives to Swedenborg in his works, for though he is a seer of visions and the Messenger of the new age, he is still bound within the limits enforced by other founders of Churches. He did express to Charles Augustus Tulk, the thought recorded by James Garth Wilkinson,

> Blake informed Tulk that he had two different states; one in which he liked Swedenborg's Writings, and one in which he disliked them. The second was a state of pride in himself, and then they were distasteful to him, but afterwards he knew that he had not been wise and sane. The first was a state of humility, in which he received and accepted Swedenborg.[38]

Paley thinks this reflects the diplomatic attitude of Blake towards Tulk,[39] and Davies thinks it is a piece of Swedenborgian propaganda;[40] at the time Blake was an unknown poet and artist, and from the reading of Blake's life, it is difficult to find another incident when Blake acted diplomatically! The opposite was the case: Blake spoke his mind always, without fear or favour.

In his 'Illustrations to Dante' Blake expresses his mind very forcibly in relation to Swedenborg. In his comments to the design 'Hell Canto 4', in which the heathen make this world the centre of all things, he states:

> Swedenborg does the same in saying that in this World is the Ultimate of Heaven.
> This is the most damnable Falshood of Satan & his Antichrist

It may well be that Blake's 'Spiritual teacher', as he called Swedenborg to Henry Crabb Robinson, was ever at the back of his mind. He could not forget him, or ignore him. A child of the new age, Blake,

had respect for the one who had declared that the New Age had come, at the time of his own birth, and he was happy in that fact. What Blake hoped for, was that Swedenborg's Writings would change the whole world for good; instead, his followers merely used them to embrace a new institution exactly like the old. Yet, Swedenborg could not be ignored, even if he was 'Samson shorn by the Churches'; his powerful visionary images moved the depth of Blake's soul, so that he could not but respond, if the New Jerusalem was to be built in 'England's green and pleasant land.'

SUMMING UP - 'THE GOLDEN STRING'

1.

In this study consideration has been given to the influence which the Writings of Emanuel Swedenborg might have had on the thought and writing of William Blake. Influence could have been thought too strong a word to have been used in considering the relationship of Blake and Swedenborg. By influence can be implied change. Was Blake ever changed by what he read in Swedenborg? It is more likely that he used Swedenborgian ideas as a vehicle to express his own spiritual experiences. If by influence there is implied the creation of opposition, then an influence might be alluded to. The work The Marriage of Heaven and Hell reflects apparent opposition to the bold statements of Swedenborg. But 'opposition is true friendship', Blake states. Was it that in this work Blake was expressing his condemnation of those who formed the separatist movement, thinking they had not gone far enough, but were now merely revamping a dying institution? Ideas are free and volatile, whereas institutions are static and monolithic. For Blake 'The New Church is activity'; such a concept would appear pale in the form of hymn books, set prayers and clerical dress, which subjects were high on the agenda of the separatists at their early

Conferences. Ideas suggest also another avenue to explore, a new approach to be made, and Blake was ready to enter into argument when ideas challenged his own assumptions. Is this why 'opposition is true friendship', for there is respect for the other, even if agreement is not reached? He did speak of Swedenborg as his 'divine teacher', which marks respect and appreciation.

Does Blake's comment to Henry Crabb Robinson that Swedenborg is his 'divine teacher' suggest that Blake sees Swedenborg as an ally? Blake sought to open the eternal world through the immortal eyes: Swedenborg had also performed this task and recorded his experiences in his works. Did Swedenborg's Writings influence Blake to undertake this task? What he had 'most at heart: more than life or all that seems to make life comfortable without, Is the Interest of True Religion and Science'.[1] These remarks from his letter to Thomas Butts suggest that Blake saw a mission, equal to that presented by Swedenborg, the proclamation of the New Age and the establishment of the New Jerusalem. Swedenborg expressed these things through his writings, as the dispensation of the Second Coming. Blake used the power of art to express his purpose, supported by his own epic writing. So Blake accepts <u>his</u> mission, to find expression through <u>his</u> own system, rather than be a mild imitator of another. Swedenborg was an ally in the mission, but not the sole leader. Blake was ever his own man and could not share with another at the expense of compromising himself. But an ally is not necessarily an influence, he could be a challenge to discover great things: to use Blake's own terms, contraries in action.

If by influence one thinks of selectivity, then traces can be found of Swedenborgian thought in Blake's work, most clearly in the use of the concept the 'Divine Humanity'. But is this affirmation, or

confirmation of deeper feelings which as yet have not found expression in a selected terminology? In this Swedenborg supplies a phrase to match the inner feelings within Blake's own thinking. Even if this influence is seen in use of words and phrases, it becomes proof of what was present in the ideas presented, that the influence becomes more oblique than direct. This comes out clearly in the marginalia to Swedenborg's works. Blake has ready thought and pencil in hand as he reads: this is not mere submission to what is stated, but a comment worth noting for later reflection. Or a challenge to what is written, for he is not a slave to the system of another.

Attraction to the thoughts of others, especially when in some way they are compatible with one's own, can be seen as a form of influence. Personal thoughts can be sharpened by the interaction: it can refine or re-direct one's thinking. It can also confirm that one's own thinking is not foolish, futile or even bordering on madness. Influence of this nature is more subtle than the notion of forthright change might suggest. Swedenborg was the philosopher-theologian, but Blake was the practical artist. Love, affection, activity, for Blake, were the hallmarks of Swedenborgian thought. So if the humanitarian aspects of New Church teaching found a ready acceptance in his mind, Blake desired to transfer the somewhat abstract Swedenborgian theology into more readily understandable concepts. Hence Blake's attraction to the 'Divine Humanity'. Here for Blake is a living God, not the lifeless creation of the deists or the rationalists. Blake challenged the 'enlightenment' with its cold reasoning, for he wished to build a New Jerusalem in 'England's green and pleasant land'. Heaven's gate for him did not rest in formal doctrines or prescribed rituals. Blake used Swedenborg's thoughts to help him understand his own spiritual

experiences. In this way influence of attraction can serve a use if it does not become an influence of slavish acceptance.

The view that influence is an imposition of thought could not be applied to Blake in respect of Swedenborg's thinking. Nor would Swedenborg himself expect it to be so; he declared, 'Now it is allowable to enter with the understanding into the things of faith'. This was no blind leading, but a rational understanding, which leads to a transformation of life. Here the innocence of ignorance leads to the innocence of wisdom. Faith becomes not words alone, but when united to charity the activity of real life. 'All religion has relation to life, and the life of religion is to do good'. These words of Swedenborg are also a spring board for Blake's own feeling on the meaning and purpose of religion.

Influence as the gentle persuader in order to extend the individual vision is real. Blake himself was ready to take the "golden string' and begin to wind it so that it could lead him to 'Heaven's Gate, Built in Jerusalem's walls'. In this endeavour Blake found Swedenborg's writings a mutual companion, both to stimulate thought and challenge misconceptions, to confirm the truth and reject the false, and to break down prejudice and build up new directions. Swedenborg's ideas offered compassion, concern and hope to a lost world in despair; they challenged the corruption and the selfcentredness in society; they presented a new order for the future. Blake had respect for his 'divine teacher'; he had learned much from him; he confirmed many of his own deeper feelings, and he demonstrated that there was nothing to fear in death. Blake was a happy man, and with his angelic companion Catherine, there could be nothing but contentment to eternity: Swedenborg's writings had assured him on that score.

2

Blake set out on the pilgrimage of life seeking to offer a 'golden thread' for all to take and wind into a ball for themselves. He does not seek to present ready-made creeds, which can be seized in a moment without effort on man's part. He was conscious that individual regeneration is attained through doubt and exaltation, self sacrifice and the freeing of material ties. In this way the struggle held out no compromise. Blake sought always to be honest with himself:

> I should be sorry if I had any earthly fame for whatever natural glory a man has is so much detracted from spiritual glory. I wish to do nothing for profit. I wish to live for art. I want nothing whatsoever. I am quite happy.[2]

Blake must ever be his own man. If in the Songs Swedenborg's influence is strongest, that is because Blake himself was searching for a new way of spiritual expression, and he found Swedenborg a favourable companion. In Marriage the strength of Blake's own thinking shows itself, when he comments that he himself was giving 'new truths' for a New Age, and that in perspective; Swedenborg was only conveying old truths in a new guise. Blake felt he was outstripping his spiritual guide. Yet, in old age, Blake was ready to confess that Swedenborg had been his 'divine teacher', and he recommended other young artists to read him, for the inspiration he might give them in matters of spiritual worth. This acknowledges that Swedenborg has useful things to say, and much can be gained by pondering over what he has written.

In Marriage there is an apparent departure from Swedenborg in a clash of ideas, but Blake does not completely cut himself off from Swedenborgian thought. In Jerusalem, the construction of the canon of Scripture is a Swedenborgian pattern, not an orthodox one. Blake was

aware of the books he was assigning to the canon, and he could so easily have modified the list. But he chose a pattern which was presented to him when he attended with his wife, the First General Conference of the New Church. The stress of this named canon of scripture is that the books mentioned contain a 'spiritual sense'. Other books may be inspired, but they did not contain the golden thread which binds those books with a spiritual sense into a unity. This unity is called the Word of God or Sacred Scriptures in the eyes of Swedenborg. Obviously it was the idea of a spiritual connotation which attracted Blake. If the Bible was to be transformed from the early history of a people, to become the instrument of God's relationship with mankind, then it must be through an understanding of the true meaning of the books of the Bible. The revelation of God must be for all people, so the depth of its spirituality must be made known. Blake saw this to be so, and he hints at the 'golden string' which may represent for him the symbol of the golden thread which binds the spiritual sense of the Word of God. He invites his readers to take of this thread, for it will lead them into Jerusalem's walls. In Swedenborgian terminology, the 'walls of the New Jerusalem'[3] are the truths of the new dispensation. Those truths would lead to the good of life, that is, the life of heaven itself. This image Blake has grasped and used effectively, even if he sees the whole concept as applicable to life, and not simply the works of Swedenborg. If by poetic genius he had the vision to see the spirit alive in the letter of Scripture, he was still able to see in the hardness and retributive values of the Old Testament, an expression of the contrary thought, which mankind possesses before he moves on to gain the innocence of wisdom.

Man may have lost his innocence, but Blake believed that

through experience it could be regained. The manacles that bind man are forged by the human mind, and it will be that same human mind which will smash and break them. As Blake himself wrote on a page of The Four Zoas, 'Innocence dwells with wisdom, but never with Ignorance.'[4] Swedenborg spoke of the 'innocence of ignorance' which through the conflict of life can become 'the innocence of wisdom'.[5] Such innocence is heavenly; and this Swedenborgian concept Blake readily makes his own, though they may take different routes in achieving it.

Blake was well aware that man's treatment of his fellow man meant that change must go beyond the idea of social and political change. The true revolution must be in the heart and mind of the individual. Swedenborg's 'new age' suggested a pattern forward, the establishment of a new order. Blake readily responded to this, but soon found that others who embraced the master's teachings had set their sights far lower than his own. Swedenborg's works offered hope to a world that had lost its direction. As George Dole remarks, Blake had no time

> for church institutions which claimed the power to save. In fact, he was more tolerant of 'good Gentiles', than of people who accepted a distorted Christianity.[6]

If at times Blake battled with Swedenborg it was because of the fear that dogmatism could so easily take over as his mind sought to discover new ideas. Blake would not accept the 'mind-forged manacles' inherent in the system of another, lest it enslave him. The cry of The Marriage of Heaven and Hell is that the truth will out and be declared. As Blake sees it, Swedenborg is presenting 'old truths' in a new guise, and it is the new guise that becomes the challenge to Blake. He cannot allow that to be; he must strive to present his view of Swedenborg lest his followers destroy it through institutionalisation. But the

ideas and forms the presentation takes must be Blake's own.

Blake always sought to reinterpret Swedenborg. He sees an inward, more real, human nature. There is not the accepted division of body and soul, with little hope of reconciliation. But man is a being of contraries: these contraries can be reconciled through the imagination. Blake's imagination is 'the midway point between the mysticism and the materialism.'[7] Through imagination he has a sense of his spiritual nature which shows him the direction he should take: one lives more fully in the mortal body when it is accepted that life flows into that body from above, as the spirituality in man, being the gift of God to him.

3.

The Second Coming of the Lord, and the establishment of a New Church, was to be effected by means of a man who could not 'only receive intellectually the doctrine of his church, but also publish them in print.'[8] This had been Swedenborg's task. Blake responded by objecting to the thought that truth could only be received through the understanding, and by means of the letterpress pages, which appeared to be a corollary to the reception of truth by the understanding, in Swedenborg's terms. Blake incorporated illustrations in his text to express his ideas. He also introduced his own special method of printing plates. In this way Blake establishes his own system which could be as effective as that of Swedenborg. His declaration of truth was not bounded by the logical structures inherent in language itself: but the eye also had the power to visualise for itself. Swedenborg helped Blake understand more deeply his own spiritual experience and representation. This served to give visionary articulation to personal

spiritual experience, which Blake believed to be a part of human freedom.

There is essential originality in Blake's work, though many may have contributed and influenced his thinking. As Gleckner remarks, 'Blake's system only gradually developed, with many fits and starts'.[9] It would be wrong, therefore, to say that Blake gained nothing from his study of Swedenborg's Writings, which as we saw earlier, was the extreme end of the spectrum concerning the opinion on the Blake-Swedenborg connection. At the other end of the spectrum, it would not be correct to say that Blake gained everything of a spiritual nature from Swedenborg alone. The middle ground appears to express best the truth. Swedenborg made an invaluable contribution to Blake's thinking on spiritual matters. At times this would be overwhelming, as he was struggling to find his own terminology and mode of expression. If Blake had persevered more in his understanding of Swedenborg's teaching, as some have suggested, then the influence might have been greater, but Blake himself might well have been less of the innovator. Blake's intention was not to be a religious leader but rather like others of a Christian disposition, to discover the secret of true living. And whatever he discovered he desired to share with others through the media he knew best, the artistic and the poetic. The restrictions imposed by institutions would go against all that Blake expressed in his sense of freedom. Contraries there might be, but from conflict arises a new state: innocence is rediscovered through experience.

As a child of the new age, living through momentous times, believing that 'everything that lives is holy', Blake set his task to bring others to that realisation also. Blake valued dearly his personal freedom, and could not be a slave to another man's system, yet he was

willing to use Swedenborg's writings as a guide in his personal quest for life. Swedenborg was a means of helping Blake free himself,

> from the crude literalism of much popular millenarian thought of the period and enabling him to see how the work of a new generation of biblical scholars, could engage the human imagination in ways that would have been impossible for earlier generations.[10]

So if not for the whole of his life, at least for part of it, Swedenborg was a powerful influence upon his thinking, as he endeavoured to reconcile a divided world and nature into one, in the name of Jesus, the Divine Humanity.

Blake's legacy to his readers, gained from his 'divine teacher', is an invitation to future hope and life:

> I give you the end of a golden string
> Only wind it into a ball,
> It will lead you in at Heaven's Gate
> Built in Jerusalem's Wall.

APPENDIX

A - Page from the Minute Book of the East Cheap Chapel

B - Invitation Letter to the First General Conference and Propositions

C - List of Swedenborg's Theological Works

D - List of Members:

a) Invitation Letter
b) Signatories to Minutes of the First Conference
c) Names found in East Cheap Chapel Minute Book
d) Signatories to the Circular Letter, 1788
e) Others on Hindmarsh's List

General Conference

Thursday afternoon, May 19th, 1904 at 2:30 o'clock

Report of the Proceedings.

The Conference was called to order by the President, Elder

Elder Hyrum M. Smith offered the opening prayer.

The following persons were sustained by the vote of the Conference as the General Authorities of the Church, viz:

Joseph F. Smith as President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; Anthon H. Lund as First Counselor to the President, and John R. Winder as Second Counselor to the President; the Council of the Twelve Apostles; Patriarch, Hyrum G. Smith; the First Council of Seventy; Presiding Bishopric, Orson F. Whitney, Charles W. Nibley, and David A. Smith; Presiding Patriarch, John Smith; Assistant Church Historian, Andrew Jenson; Presidents of Stakes and their Counselors; Bishops of Wards; Presidents of Missions; Presidents of Temples and their Counselors; Presidents of Districts; Presidents of Branches; Traveling Elders; Presidents of Quorums of Elders; Presidents of Quorums of Seventy; Presidents of Quorums of High Priests; Presidents of Quorums of Teachers; Presidents of Quorums of Deacons; Presidents of Relief Societies; Presidents of Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Associations; Presidents of Primary Associations; Presidents of Sunday Schools; Superintendents of Religion Classes; Presidents of Y. M. M. I. Associations; Presidents of Y. W. M. I. Associations; Superintendents of Primary Associations; Superintend

APPENDIX B

SIR,

AS a Friend to the Eſtabliſhment of the New Church diſtinct from the Old, you are hereby invited to the above-mentioned CONFERENCE, to be held in Great Eaſt Cheap, London, on Eaſter Monday the 13th of April next, at Nine o'Clock in the Morning. Any Perſon within the Circle of your Acquaintance, whom you know to be a Lover of the Truths contained in the Theological Writings of EMANUEL SWEDENBORG, and friendly to the Formation of a New Church, agreeable to the Doctrines contained in the ſaid Writings, and conſiſtent with the Plan propoſed in this Circular Paper, you are at Liberty alſo to invite; as Nothing but the real Welfare and Promotion of the New Jeruſalem Church is hereby intended; which End, it is thought, may be moſt effectually anſwered by a general Concurrence of the Members of the New Church at large.

Signed in Behalf of the New Church at London,

The COMMITTEE.
THOMAS WRIGHT, *Preſident.*
ROBERT HINDMARSH, *Treaſurer and Secretary.*
JOHN AUGUSTUS TULK.
THOMAS WILLDON.
RICHARD THOMPSON.
ISAAC HAWKINS.
MANOAH SIBLY.
SAMUEL SMITH.
JAMES HINDMARSH.

Great Eaſt Cheap, London,
Dec. 7, 1788.

The

NEW JERUSALEM CHURCH.

Great East Cheap, London, Dec. 7, 1788.

AT a full Meeting of the Members of the New Jerusalem Church, who assemble at the above Place, for the Purpose of considering the most effectual Means of promoting the Establishment of the New Church, distinct from the Old, both in this and other Countries, it was unanimously agreed, that a General CONFERENCE of all the Readers of the Theological Writings of EMANUEL SWEDENBORG, who are desirous of rejecting, and separating themselves from the Old Church, or the present established Churches, together with all their Sectaries, throughout Christendom, and of fully embracing the Heavenly Doctrines of the New Church, be held in Great East Cheap, London, on Easter Monday, the 13th Day of April, 1789; when the following Propositions, containing the principal Doctrines of the New Church, will be taken into serious Consideration, and such Resolutions submitted to the said Meeting, as may be found necessary to promote the above Design.

PROPOSITIONS.

I. That Jehovah God, the Creator of Heaven and Earth, is One in Essence and in Person, in whom is a Divine Trinity, consisting of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, like Soul, Body, and Operation in Man; and that the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is that God. *True Christian Religion*, n. 5 to 24, 25, 164 to 191, 180.

II. That Jehovah God Himself came down from Heaven as Divine Truth, which is the Word, and took upon him Human Nature for the Purpose of removing Hell from Man, of restoring the Heavens to Order, and of preparing the Way for a New Church upon Earth; and that herein consists the true Nature of Redemption, which was effected solely by the Omnipotence of the Lord's Divine Humanity. *True Christ. Rel.* n. 85, 86, 115 to 117, 124, 125.

III. That a Trinity of Divine Persons existing from Eternity, or before the Creation of the World, when conceived in Idea, is a Trinity of Gods, which cannot be expelled by the Oral Confession of One God. *True Christ. Rel.* n. 172, 173.

IV. That to believe Redemption to have consisted in the Passion of the Cross, is a fundamental Error of the Old Church; and that this Error, together with that relating to the Existence of Three Divine Persons from Eternity, hath perverted the whole Christian Church, so that Nothing Spiritual is left remaining in it. *True Christ. Rel.* n. 132, 133.

V. That all Prayers directed to a Trinity of distinct Persons, and not to a Trinity conjoined in One Person, are henceforth not attended to, but are in Heaven like ill-scented Odours. *True Christ. Rel.* n. 108.

VI. That hereafter no Christian can be admitted into Heaven, unless he believeth in the Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ, and approacheth him alone. *True Christ. Rel.* n. 26, 107, 108.

VII. That the Doctrines universally taught in the Old Church, particularly respecting Three Divine Persons, the Atonement, Justification by Faith alone, the Resurrection of the material Body, &c. &c. are highly dangerous to the Rising Generation, inasmuch as they tend to ingraft in their Infant Minds Principles diametrically opposite to those of the New Church, and consequently hurtful to their Salvation. *True Christ. Rel.* n. 23, 173.

VIII. That the Nicene and Athanasian Doctrine concerning a Trinity have together given Birth to a Faith, which hath entirely overturned the Christian Church. *True Christ. Rel.* n 177

IX. That hence is come that Abomination of Desolation, and that Affliction, such as was not in all the World, neither shall be, which the Lord hath foretold in Daniel, and the Evangelists, and the Revelation. *True Christ. Rel.* n. 179.

X. That hence too it is come to pass, that unless a New Heaven and a New Church be established by the Lord, no Flesh can be saved. *True Christ. Rel.* n. 182.

XI. That the Word of the Lord is Holy; and that it containeth a three-fold Sense, namely, Celestial, Spiritual, and Natural, which are united by Correspondences; and that in each Sense it is Divine Truth, accommodated respectively to the Angels of the Three Heavens, and also to Men on Earth. *True Christ. Rel.* n. 193 to 213.

XII. That the Books of the Word are all those which have the Internal Sense, which are as follow, viz. in the Old Testament, the five Books of Moses, called Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy; the Book of Joshua, the Book of Judges, the two Books of Samuel, the two Books of Kings, the Psalms of David, the Prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezechiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi; and in the New Testament, the four Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and the Revelation. And that the other Books, not having the Internal Sense, are not the Word. *Arcana Cœlestia*, n. 10325. *New Jer.* n. 266. *White Horse*, n. 16.

XIII. That in the Spiritual World there is a Sun distinct from that of the Natural World; the Essence of which is pure Love from Jehovah God, who is in the Midst thereof; that the Heat also proceeding from that Sun is in it's Essence Love and the Light thence proceeding is in it's Essence Wisdom; and that by the Instrumentality of that Sun all Things were created, and continue to subsist, both in the Spiritual and in the Natural World. *True Christ. Rel.* n. 75. *Influx*, n. 5.

XIV. That immediately on the Death of the material Body, (which will never be re-assumed,) Man rises again as to his spiritual or substantial Body, wherein he existeth in a perfect Human Form; and thus that Death is only a Continuation of Life. *New Jer.* n. 223 to 229.

XV. That the State and Condition of Man after Death is according to his past Life in this World; and that the predominant Love, which he takes with him into the Spiritual World, continues with him for ever, and can never be changed to all Eternity; consequently, that if his predominant Love be good, he abides in Heaven to all Eternity, but if it be evil, he abides in Hell to all Eternity. *Heaven and Hell*, n. 480, 521 to 527. *True Christ. Rel.* n. 199. *Arc. Cal.* n. 10596, 10749. *De Amore Conjug.* n. 524. *Apoc. Explic.* n. 745, 837, 971, 1164, 1220.

XVI. That there is not in the universal Heaven a single Angel that was created such at first, nor a single Devil in all Hell, that had been created an Angel of Light, and was afterwards cast out of Heaven; but that all both in Heaven and Hell are of the Human Race, in Heaven such as had lived in the World in heavenly Love and Faith, and in Hell such as had lived in hellish Love and Faith. *Last Judgment*, n. 14. *Heav. and Hell*, n. 311 to 317.

XVII. That Man is not Life in himself, but only a Recipient of Life from the Lord, who alone is Life in Himself; which Life is communicated by Influx, to all in the Spiritual World, whether in Heaven, or in Hell, or in the intermediate State called the World of Spirits, and to all in the natural World: but is received differently by each, according to the Quality of the recipient Subject. *True Christ. Rel.* n. 470 to 474.

XVIII. That Man hath Power to procure for himself both Faith and Charity, and also the Life of Faith and Charity; but that nevertheless Nothing belonging to Faith, Nothing belonging to Charity, and Nothing belonging to the Life of each, is from Man, but from the Lord. *True Christ. Rel.* n. 356 to 359.

XIX. That Charity and Faith are mere mental and perishable Things, unless they be determined to Works, and exist therein, whensoever it is practicable. And that neither Charity alone, nor Faith alone produce good Works; but that both Charity and Faith together are necessary to produce them. *True Christ. Rel.* n. 375 to 377, 450 to 453.

XX. That there are three universal Loves, viz. the Love of Heaven, the Love of the World, and the Love of Self, which, when in right Subordination, make Man perfect; but when they are not in right Subordination, that they pervert and invert him. *True Christ. Rel.* n. 394 to 405.

XXI. That Man hath Free-will in spiritual Things, and that without this Free-will the Word would be of no Manner of Use, and consequently no Church could exist; and that without Free-will in spiritual Things there would be Nothing about Man, whereby he might join himself by Reciprocation with the Lord, but God himself would be chargeable as the Author of Evil, and all would be mere absolute Predestination, which is shocking and detestable. *True Christ. Rel.* n. 479 to 485. *New Jer.* 141 to 149.

XXII. That Miracles are not to be expected at this Day, because they carry Compulsion with them, and take away Man's Free-will in spiritual Things. *True Christ. Rel.* n. 501, 849. *Div. Prov.* n. 130.

XXIII. That Repentance is the Beginning and Foundation of the Church in Man; and that it consisteth in a Man's examining not only the Actions of his Life, but also the Intentions of his Will, and in abstaining from Evils, because they are Sins against God. *True Christ. Rel.* n. 510 to 566.

XXIV. That Regeneration or the New Birth is effected of the Lord alone, by Charity and Faith, during Man's Co-operation; and that it is a gradual, not an instantaneous Work, the several Stages thereof answering to those of Man's natural Birth, in that he is conceived, carried in the Womb, brought forth, and educated. *True Christ. Rel.* n. 576 to 578, 503 to 506.

XXV. That in Proportion as Man is regenerated, in the same Proportion his Sins are removed; and that this Removal is what is meant in the Word by the Remission of Sins. *True Christ. Rel.* n. 611 to 614.

XXVI. That all have a Capacity to be regenerated, because all are redeemed, every one according to his State. *True Christ. Rel.* n. 579 to 582.

XXVII. That both evil Spirits and good Spirits are attendant upon every Man; and that the evil Spirits dwell in, and excite his evil Affections and that the good Spirits dwell in and excite his good Affections. *True Christ. Rel.* n. 596, &c.

XXVIII. That spiritual Temptations, which are Conflicts between Good and Evil, Truth and Falshood, are a Means of Purification and Regeneration, and that the Lord alone fighteth for Man therein. *Ibid.*

XXIX. That the Imputation of the Merit and Righteousness of Christ, which consists in Redemption, is a Thing impossible; and that it can no more be applied or ascribed to any Angel or Man, than the Creation and Preservation of the Universe can; Redemption being a Kind of Creation of the Angelic Heaven anew, and also of the Church. *True Christ. Rel.* n. 640.

XXX. That the Imputation, which really takes Place, and which is maintained by the New Church from the Word, is an Imputation of Good and Evil, and at the same time of Faith; and that the Lord imputeth Good to every Man, and that Hell imputeth Evil to every Man. *True Christ. Rel.* n. 643 to 646.

XXXI. That

XXXI. That the Faith and Imputation of the New Church cannot abide together with the Faith and Imputation of the Old Church; and in Case they abide together, such a Collision and Conflict will ensue, as will prove fatal to every Thing that relates to the Church in Man. *True Christ. Rel.* n. 647 to 649. *Brief Expos.* n. 96, 103.

XXXII. That there is not a single genuine Truth remaining in the Old Church, but what is falsified; and that herein is fulfilled the Lord's Prediction in Matthew xxiv. 2, that "one Stone of the Temple shall not be left upon another, that shall not be thrown down." *True Christ. Rel.* n. 174, 177, 180, 758.

XXXIII. That now it is allowable to enter intellectually into the Mysteries of Faith, contrary to the ruling Maxim in the Old Church, that the Understanding is to be kept bound under Obedience to Faith. *True Christ. Rel.* n. 185, 508. *Apoc. Rev.* n. 564, 914.

XXXIV. That external Forms of Worship, agreeable to the Doctrines of the New Church, are necessary, in Order that the Members of the New Church may worship God in One Person, according to the Dictates of their own Consciences, and that their Acknowledgments of the Lord may, by descending into the Ultimates, be confirmed, and thus their external Man act in Unity with their internal. *Apoc. Rev.* n. 533, 707. *True Christ. Rel.* n. 23, 177, 508.

XXXV. That the two Sacraments of Baptism, and the Holy Supper, are essential Institutions in the New Church, the Uses of which are now revealed, together with the spiritual Sense of the Word. *True Christ. Religion*, n. 667 to 730.

XXXVI. That the Kingdom of the Lord, both in Heaven and on Earth, is a Kingdom of Uses. *True Christ. Rel.* n. 387, 459. *Arc. Cal.* n. 5395.

XXXVII. That true Conjugal Love, which can only exist between One Husband and One Wife, is a primary Characteristic of the New Church, being grounded on the Marriage of Goodness and Truth, and corresponding with the Marriage of the Lord and his Church; and therefore it is more celestial, spiritual, holy, pure, and clean, than any other Love in Angels or Men. *De Amore Conjug.* n. 57 to 73.

XXXVIII. That the Last Judgment was accomplished in the Spiritual World in the Year 1757; and that the former Heaven and the former Earth, or the Old Church, are passed away, and that all Things are become New. *Last Judgment*, n. 45. *True Christ. Rel.* n. 115, 772. *Apoc. Rev.* n. 886. *Brief Expos.* n. 95.

XXXIX. That Now is the Second Advent of the Lord, which is a Coming, not in Person, but in the Power and Glory of the Spiritual Sense of His Holy Word, which is Himself. *True Christ. Rel.* n. 776 to 778.

XL. That this Second Coming of the Lord is effected by Means of his Servant EMANUEL SWEDENBORG, before whom he hath manifested himself in Person, and whom he hath filled with his Spirit, to teach the Doctrines of the New Church by the Word from Him. *True Christ. Rel.* n. 779.

XLI. That this is what is meant in the Revelation by the New Heaven and New Earth, and the New Jerusalem thence descending, prepared as a Bride adorned for her Husband. *True Christ. Rel.* n. 781.

XLII. That this New Church is the Crown of all Churches, which have heretofore existed on this earthly Globe, in Consequence of it's worshipping One Visible God, in whom is the Invisible, as the Soul is in the Body. *True Christ. Rel.* n. 786 to 790.

SIR,

AS a Friend to the Establishment of the New Church distinct from the Old, you are hereby invited to the above-mentioned CONFERENCE, to be held in Great East Cheap, London, on Easter Monday the 13th of April next, at Nine o'Clock in the Morning. Any Person within the Circle of your Acquaintance, whom you know to be a Lover of the Truths contained in the Theological Writings of EMANUEL SWEDENBORG, and friendly to the Formation of a New Church, agreeable to the Doctrines contained in the said Writings, and consistent with the Plan proposed in this Circular Paper, you are at Liberty also to invite; as Nothing but the real Welfare and Promotion of the New Jerusalem Church is hereby intended; which End, it is thought, may be most effectually answered by a general Concurrence of the Members of the New Church at large.

Signed in Behalf of the New Church at London,

The COMMITTEE.
THOMAS WRIGHT, *President.*
ROBERT HINDMARSH, *Treasurer* and *Secretary.*
JOHN AUGUSTUS TULK.
THOMAS WILLDON.
RICHARD THOMPSON.
ISAAC HAWKINS.
MANOAH SIBLY.
SAMUEL SMITH.
JAMES HINDMARSH.

Great East Cheap, London.
Dec. 7, 1788.

APPENDIX C

A list of Swedenborg's theological works with a brief description of the contents.

For a full list of his scientific works, and other posthumously published work, it is necessary to consult James Hyde's A bibliography of the works of Emanuel Swedenborg. Hyde gives the formal, Latin titles to all his work, as well as dates of publication and the various early editions. In the summary that follows the accepted English title will be followed.

THE ARCANA CAELESTIA: 1749-1756. This work is now issued in twelve octavo volumes with, in addition, two volume's index compiles by E. Rich on the basis of a posthumous manuscript of the author. This is in many ways the most important work of Swedenborg, consisting of a verse by verse commentary on Genesis and Exodus, in which the internal sense of these books is set forth; there is reference made to other books of the Bible also. Each chapter is introduced and concluded with a doctrinal dissertation or description of the author's experiences in the spiritual world. It was published volume by volume as completed, and this over a period of eight years.

HEAVEN AND HELL: 1758. It is essentially a scientist's account of the underlying nature of the spiritual world. It is an examination of principle rather than mere external phenomena. Many footnotes refer to the Arcana Caelestia.

THE WHITE HORSE: 1758. This is a short tract interpreting the internal sense of the passage from Revelation 19 in which the White Horse and its Rider are described. This is basically a collection of references to be found in Arcana Caelestia.

THE LAST JUDGEMENT AND THE DESTRUCTION OF BABYLON: 1758. It is concerned with events in the spiritual world, with a discussion on the problem of Judgement. There are references to Heaven and Hell and Arcana Caelestia. Often associated with this work is A continuation concerning the Last Judgement, published in 1763.

NEW JERUSALEM AND ITS HEAVENLY DOCTRINES: 1758. This is a handbook on New Church teaching, after which an explanation of the significance of the New Jerusalem in the Apocalypse as a new Church or Dispensation, sets forth the doctrines subject by subject; there are also copious references to the Arcana Caelestia for confirmation.

THE EARTHS IN THE UNIVERSE: 1758. This is virtually a rescript of passages found in Arcana Caelestia; it is also referred to in Heaven and Hell. It presents a picture of a universe literally teeming with life. It describes the life on other planets from conversations with spirits in the spiritual world.

THE FOUR LEADING DOCTRINES: 1763. They cover the Doctrines of the Lord, Sacred Scripture, Life and Faith and were first published separately. There is copious reference to Scripture to support the doctrine set forth. In the works there are references to the Last Judgement and Heaven and Hell.

DIVINE LOVE AND WISDOM: 1763. This is a major work in spiritual philosophy. It consists of five parts; (a) of God, (b) of the spiritual sun, (c) of degrees, (d) of the creation of the universe, (e) of the creation of man. Reference is also made in the work to Arcana Caelestia and Heaven and Hell.

DIVINE PROVIDENCE: 1764. This is an important work treating the Divine Providence as the government of the Divine Love and Wisdom of the Lord. it discusses man's creation, his freedom and rationality, the laws of Providence, profanation, the laws of the permission of evil, and the statement that the Lord cannot act contrary to his own divine order. References are made to Arcana Caelestia, Heaven and Hell, Doctrine of the Lord, and Doctrine of the Sacred Scripture.

THE APOCALYPSE REVEALED: 1766. This is a verse by verse exposition of the Book of Revelation, setting forth the spiritual sense of the book. there is discussion of the doctrine of the Christian Church, both Catholic and Reformed and declares the book to be a prophecy, relating to a Church, now in process of fulfilment. There are Memorabilia at the end of each chapter.

CONJUGIAL LOVE: 1768. This book contains detailed consideration of the essential spiritual nature of sex and marriage and of the effects of disorder and adultery upon the soul. It is not strictly a theological work, rather one of morals. Yet, it contains important teaching concerning the ideal of marriage.

BRIEF EXPOSITION: 1769. This is a tract in which the Protestant and Catholic doctrines are first stated and then their falsities are exposed, with a statement of the true doctrine of the New Church.

INTERCOURSE OF THE SOUL AND THE BODY: 1769. This treatise discusses the problem of whether the mind acts upon the body or the body upon the mind, and the relationship between soul and body.

TRUE CHRISTIAN RELIGION: 1771. This is a massive work of Christian doctrine firmly based in the letter of Scripture. It treats in a systematic manner the leading tenets of the Christian faith. Memorabilia are inserted in the various sections, and the work is regarded as the crowning book in the long line of theological writings by Swedenborg. Reference is made to Apocalypse Revealed, Heaven and Hell, The White Horse.

APPENDIX D

List of Members

a) Signatories to the Letter of Invitation:

Thomas Wright
Lived at No. 6 Poultry, was a Watchmaker to the King. Active in the Theosophical Society and the early General Conferences and President of the Committee which issued the Invitation Letter.

Robert Hindmarsh
Printer and Publisher by Royal Appointment. Secretary and Treasurer of the Committee which issued the Invitation Letter. Was instrumental in the establishment of the New Church as an organisation. He also translated a number of Swedenborg's works.

John Augustus Tulk
A man of independent means and father of Charles Augustus Tulk, and a patron of William Blake.

Thomas Willdon
A valuable and zealous member of the New Church and a co-renter of the Great East Cheap Chapel. Active in the early Conferences.

Richard Thompson
A Floor Cloth Manufacturer. He was active in the early Conference and a supporter of Robert Hindmarsh in early disputes. He was a co-builder and proprietor of the Cross Street Church.

Isaac Hawkins
Became an Ordained Minister of the New Church, after conversation by James Hindmarsh to Swedenborg's teachings.

Manoah Sibly
A Bookseller, who became an Ordained Minister of the New Church and served the New Jerusalem Church, Friars' Street, Blackfriars.

Samuel Smith
Was one of the first two men to be ordained into the New Church.

James Hindmarsh
Father of Robert Hindmarsh, a Wesleyan preacher, and along with Samuel Smith was one of the first ordained Ministers of the New Church.

b) Signatories to the Minutes of the First Conference:

Henry Peckitt
President of the Conference. A retired Apothecary of Soho, who joined the Swedenborg Group in 1783.

Robert Beaton
Secretary of the Conference. Lived in Rotherham and was a contributor to the Magazine of Knowledge.

August Nordenskjöld
A Swede and older brother of C.F. Nordenskjold, who with Charles Berns Wadstrom issued a plan for a "Free Community upon the Coast of Africa".

Charles Berns Wadström
A Swede, who with C.F. Nordenskjold sought to establish a "free community" on the coast of Africa. He was an Assessor of the College of Mines in Sweden.

Samuel Hands
Came from Derby and was active in the early Conferences. He was a founder of the New Church in Birmingham.

Henry Servanté
A Gentleman of London, and editor in chief of New Jerusalem Magazine in 1790. He was associated with some of the early publications of Swedenborg's works, and a member of the London Universal Society.

Benjamin Banks
Was a musical instrument maker from Salisbury. He was President of the 1791 General Conference.

Charles Harford
From Liverpool and active in the organisation: he may be a brother of Benedict Harford who signed the "Circular Letter".

John Willdon
Hindmarsh sates that along with his brother Thomas he was an active member of the Church. He served on the Committee of 1789.

John Ashpinshaw
Of London.

Robert Jackson
From Jamaica. Was ordained a New Church Minister in 1790, and sought to teach the Swedenborgian doctrines in Jamaica.

James Cruden
From America, and active in the London New Church during 1790.

John Augustus Tulk
Signed the Letter of Invitation to the First General Conference.

Benedict Chastanier
A French Surgeon who settled in England. An avid reader of the mystical writers. Joined the Duche circle and active in the Theosophical Society. Translated a number of Swedenborg's works into French. Was active in Freemasonry both in France and England.

c) Names of those found in the Minute Book of the Great East Cheap Chapel who attended the First General Conference

Augustus Nordenskjöld
His name appears in section b

Charles Harford
His name appears in section b

John Child
Maybe a relative of William Child who signed the Circular Letter of 1788.

Frederick von Walden
In the Swedish navy and a merchant mariner. Fought in the English navy during the American Revolution. In 1791 he retired from the Swedish navy and wrote books about Swedenborg and the New Church.

Daniel Banham
Nothing known of him.

Benj. Carpenter
Nothing known of him.

Josh. Richards
Maybe the Joseph Richards added by the editor to Hindmarsh's Rise and Progress.

F.H. Barthelemon
No doubt F.H. Barthelemon a violinist and composer who contributed musical compositions to the New Jerusalem Magazine 1790. He was a director of the Lambeth Asylum for Female Orphans during Duche's chaplaincy.

Thos. Carter
There is a minor sculptor by that name who exhibited a drawing at the Royal Academy 1787.

Jno. Aspinshaw
His name appears in section b.

R. Beatson
His name appears in section b.

W. and C. Blake
The poet, artist and engraver and his wife.

Dor. Gott
Nothing known of him.

John Haywood
Nothing known of him.

Thomas Scott
Nothing known of him.

----- Harman
Nothing known of him.

d) Signatories to the Circular Letter addressed to the Friends at Manchester by the members of Great East Cheap, December 7th 1788, giving reasons for the separation from the Old Church.

John Augustus Tulk
His name appears in section a.

Betty Tulk
Wife of John Augustus Tulk and mother of Charles Augustus Tulk.

Robert Hindmarsh
His name appears in section a.

Sarah Hindmarsh
The wife of Robert Hindmarsh.

Thomas Wright
His name appears in section a.

George William Wright
Possibly related to Thomas Wright, or James Wright, leader of the Keighley Church who was Ordained in 1790 at the General Conference.

Robert Brant
Of London, who was Ordained in the New Church in 1791, and ministered to Bristol, Hull and Brightlingsea, and for a brief time in 1810 at Dudley Court, London.

C.B. Wadström
His name appears in section b.

Isaac Hawkins
His name appears in section a.

Betty Hawkins
Presumably the wife of Isaac.

Robert Jackson
His name appears in section b.

John Legg
Nothing known of him.

Daniel Richardson
Of Clerkenwell, an artist and ornamental painter. A native of Birmingham who lived many years in London, and for a brief time in Dublin.

Elizabeth Richardson
Wife of Daniel.

Robert Atchinson
Nothing known of him.

John Ferguson
Nothing known of him.

Richard Thompson
His name appears in section a.

Thomas Willdon
His name appears in section a.

Mary Willdon
The wife of Thomas Willdon

J.R. Needham
A wholesale druggist of Cross Street.

Robert Crane
Nothing known of him.

John Willdon
His name appears in section b.

James Hindmarsh
His name appears in section a.

Phillis Hindmarsh
Wife of James and mother of Robert Hindmarsh.

Anna Hawkins
Presumably wife of John Hawkins.

Henry Servanté
His name appears in section b.

Susanna Servanté
Presumably the wife of Henry Servante.

Henry Servanté jun.
No doubt the son of Henry and Susanna Servante.

Manoah Sibley
His name appears in section a.

Sarah Sibley
Wife of Manoah.

Benedict Chastanier
His name appears in section b.

Joseph Jerome Roussell
Founder of the Swedenborgian society in Halifax, N.S.

Isaac Brand
A watch-jeweller.

Mary Brand
Presumably the wife of Isaac.

John Dowling
Major Dowling of Tower Hamlets.

Wiliam Attwell
Nothing known of him.

William Child
Presumably a relative of John Child.

John Frederic Okerblom
Nothing known of him.

Elizabeth Okerblom
Presumably the wife of John Frederic.

Samuel Hands
His name appears in section b.

Charlotte Willdon
Presumably the wife of John Willdon whose name appears in section b.

John Ball
Nothing known of him.

John Sudbury
One of the twelve who drew lots for the Ordination in April 1788.

Mary Sudbury
Presumably the wife of John.

Henrietta Edmonds
Nothing known of her.

Benjamin Banks
His names appears in section b.

Henry Peckitt
His name appears in section b.

Robert Ives
Nothing known of him.

George Robinson
One of the twelve who drew lots for the Ordination in April 1788.

Hannah Robinson
Presumably the wife of George.

William Bell
Nothing known of him.

Lawrence Hill
Nothing known of him.

Thomas Brant
No doubt a relative of Robert Brant who was Ordained into the New Church Ministry.

Charles Brant
Presumably a relative of Robert and Thomas Brant.

Thomas Foster
Nothing known of him.

Joseph Lee
A letter was read at the 1792 Conference from a Joseph Lee of Sheffield.

Timothy Morris
Nothing known of him.

John Morley
Nothing known of him.

Margaret Morley
Presumably the wife of John.

Nanney Yandell
Nothing is known of her.

Samuel Bembridge
Nothing is known of him.

Elizabeth Bembridge
Presumably the wife of Samuel.

Benedict Harford
A carver and gilder of London. May be a relative of Charles Harford whose name appears on section b.

John Citizen
Nothing is known of him.

Elizabeth Citizen
Presumably the wife of John.

Betty Welch
Nothing is known of her.

Ann Dickinson
Nothing is known of her.

Mary Jackson
Maybe related to Robert Jackson, whose name appears in section b.

Ann Hughes
Nothing is known of her.

Benjamin Bond
Nothing is known of him.

Samuel Smith
Of London, Ordained into the ministry of the New Church 1788, along with James Hindmarsh.

e) Other names appear on Hindmarsh's list of those attending meetings of the Theosophical Society.

George Adams
Of Fleet Street a Mathematical Instrument Maker to His Majesty. He helped to edit Swedenborg's Apocalypse Explained in 1785.

Mr. Emes
Of Poland Street, an engraver.

John Flaxman
Celebrated Sculptor.

Lieutenant Horseley
Of Tower Hamlets and Hoxton Square.

Benjamin Hutton
Of Friday Street, a Merchant.

Mr. Loutherbourg
Philip James de Loutherbourg of Stratford Place, Piccadilly, the celebrated Painter.

Joseph Osborne
A name added to Hindmarsh's list by Rev. Edward Madeley who edited Rise and Progress.

Thomas Osmand
Of the Bank of England and Denmark Hill, Surrey.

Thomas Parker
Counsellor-at-Law, of Red Lion Square. Was a Methodist preacher and editor of a popular edition of the Bible.

Joshua Jones Prichard
A learned Proctor of Paul Baker's Court, Doctor's Commons. He was secretary of the Theosophical Society in 1785, and leader of the group opposed to separation.

Lieutenant-General Rainsford
Of Soho Square, afterwards Governor of Gibraltar. Member of Parliament for Malden 1763. Held high office in Freemasonry and was a contact between Freemasons on the Continent and in England.

James Rayner
Like Joseph Osborne his name was added to the Hindmarsh list by the Rev. Edward Madeley.

J. Sanders
Of Great Russell Street, Bloomsbury, a Miniature Painter.

William Sharp
Of Bartholomew Lane, Threadneedle Street, an Engraver. Associated with William Blake. Left the Swedenborgians for Richard Brothers then Joanna Southcott. Helped in the production of Duché's book, Discourses on Various Subjects.

Thomas Young
Little Britain, a silversmith.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

Introduction

1. Milton, plate 41 (K 533).

2. A charge of sedition was brought against Blake, but he was acquitted G.E. Bentley, Blake Records, (Oxford 1969) p. 124.

3. A Vision of the Last Judgment pp. 71-72 (K 605).

4. Henry Crabb Robinson, On Books and their Writers, Editor E. Morley (London 1938) p.330, 'Of the faculty of vision he spoke as one he had had from early infancy'.

5. David V. Erdman, 'Blake's Early Swedenborgianism : A Twentieth-century Legend', (Comparative Literature V 1953), pp. 247-57.

6. A. Symons, William Blake, (London 1907) p.90.

7. Tulk believed that Swedenborg's work contained truths of incalcuable importance, and their effects would be found in the hearts and minds of men everywhere. An sectarian establishment, even one based on the writings of Swedenborg, would impede the development of the spiritual New Church on earth. Among others, who followed Tulk was Wilkinson and Henry James Sr. See J.J.C. Wilkinson's letter to Henry James Sr., excerpted in Clement John Wilkinson, James Garth Wilkinson: A Memoir of his Life, with a Selection from his Letters, (London 1911) pp. 188-95.

8. Erdman, p.247.

9. Pierre Berger, William Blake: poet and mystic (ET), (London 1914) pp. 53,24; E.J. Ellis, The Real Blake: a portrait biography, (London 1907) p.23; Margaret Lowery, Windows of the Morning, (Newhaven 1940) p.14; H.N. Morris, Flaxman, Blake, Coleridge, and other Men of Genius Influenced by Swedenborg, (London 1915) p.78.

10. See Milton (K 506), Descriptive Catalogue, viii (K 581-2), The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, plates 3, 21-22.

11. There is no evidence that Blake was baptised into the New Church which was a requirement for membership expressed in Minute 22 (Minutes of the First General Conference of the New Jerusalem Church, 1782). Henry Crabb Robinson states that Blake was 'converted by the evangelising minister, the Rev. Joseph Proud' Blake Records, p. 432. To view the matter in perspective cf J. Bronowski William Blake and the Age of Revolution, (London 1972) p.11, 'William Blake shared with other

leaders of his age a distaste for the established ritual of the Church of England. He was a dissenter. But his dissent was more mystical ... and derived (beyond Swedenborg) from a tradition .. (which), echoes back into the Puritan Revolution of the 1640's.

12. Mona Wilson, The Life of William Blake, (London 1978) pp 4, 56; Michael Davis, William Blake: a new kind of man, (London 1977) p.40.

13. Blake Records, p.23.

14. Alexander Gilchrist, Life of William Blake, (London 1945) 1.5 Blake Records, p.17: a person by the name of Blake (no initial) supported the Graffton Street Baptist Church.

15. Confirmation of the presence of William and Catherine Blake at the First General Conference of the New Church is found in the Minutes Book of the East Cheap Society (see Appendix A).

16. The Circular Letter is incorporated in the Minutes of the First General Conference (See Appendix B for a reproduction of a facsimile).

17. See Désirée Hirst, Hidden Riches: Traditional symbols from the Renaissance to Blake (London 1964).

18. A remark made by Blake to Henry Crabb Robinson in 1825 H.C. Robinson, Books and their writers, p.327.

19. David Bindman, Blake as an artist, (Oxford 1977) p.51.

20. Blake's annotation to Divine Love and Wisdom, para. 220. Blake places a circle round the whole paragraph.

21. Descriptive Catalogue viii (K 581).

22. 'Incidentally Swedenborg was spoken of, He was a divine teacher: he has done much and will do much good' Henry Crabb Robinson, op.cit. p.327.

23. Robert Hindmarsh, The Rise and Progress of the New Jerusalem Church, (London 1861) p13.

24. Swedenborg, Last Judgment, first English translation by R. Hindmarsh, 1788.

25. Wilson, op. cit. "Blake's rebellion against the old order by Swedenborg's announcement that 1757, the year of Blake's own birth, was, in consequence of a Spiritual Last Judgment, the first year of a New Age in which mankind would regain moral freedom", p. 56.

Section 1 : The Blake-Swedenborgian connection

1. For example, The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, and his annotations to Swedenborg's works.

2. Descriptive Catalogue (K 581).

3. Peter M. Buss, 'William Blake and the Writings of Swedenborg' Blake and Swedenborg ed. H.F. Bellam and D. Ruhl (New York 1985) p. 148.

4. David V. Erdman, 'Blake's Early Swedenborgianism: A Twentieth Century Legend', Comparative Literature V (1953), pp. 247 - 57. I. Kant: Dreams of a Spirit-Seer Illustrated by the Dreams of Metaphysics (1766).

1. The Blakean perspective.

1. Northrop Frye, Fearful Symmetry (Princeton 1974), p.29.

2. Ibid., p. 147.

3. S. Foster Damon, A Blake Dictionary, (London 1973) p. 393.

4. Erdman, art.

5. David E. Erdman, Blake Prophet Against Empire, (Princeton 1977) p. 143.

6. G.R. Sabri-Tabrizi, The "Heaven" and "Hell" of William Blake, (London 1973) p. 7.

7. Ibid., p. 6.

8. Kathleen Raine, Blake and Tradition (London 1969).

9. Kathleen Raine, Golgonooza: City of Imagination, (Ipswich 1991) p. 76.

10. Kathleen Raine, Blake and Tradition, vol. p.3.

11. Morton D. Paley, 'A New Heaven is Begun: Blake and Swedenborgianism', (Blake and Swedenborg) p. 15 - 34.

12. Ibid., p. 16.

13. Among those Paley consulted was Pastor Olle Hjern, a Swedenborgian minister, highly respected in Swedish Academic Circles.

2. The Swedenborgian Perspective

1. 'Memoirs of William Blake' editorial note, New Jerusalem Magazine, Jan. 1832, pp. 192 - 199.

2. Dr. Garth Wilkinson, Songs of Innocence and Experience, Preface p. XX1.
3. James Spilling, 'Blake the Visionary', New Church Magazine, May 1887 pp. 204 - 211, and "Blake, Artist and Poet", New Church Magazine, June 1887, pp. 253 - 259.

4. Ibid., p. 205.

5. Ibid., p. 257.

6. Ibid., p. 210.

7. H.N. Morris, Flaxman, Blake and Coleridge and Other Men of Genius influenced by Swedenborg.

8. James S. Pryke, 'William Blake and Imagination', New Church Life, March 1928, pp. 137 - 151. Quotation, p. 150.

9. Eric A. Sutton, 'Swedenborg and Blake', New Church Magazine, April - June 1929, pp.77 - 85. Quotation p. 78.

Section 2: Blake's Swedenborgian association

3. Early Swedenborgians

1. See his Travel Diaries 1710 - 1743, Documents concerning the Life and Character of Emanuel Swedenborg (London vol. 1 1875, vol.2 in 2 parts 1877) vol. 2 part 1; Documents 204 - 207.

2. Many biographies are available, but until recently the standard work in English was Life of Swedenborg, George Trowbridge (London, 1913). Recent studies have been made in Sweden, Germany and the United States, notably Martin Lamm, Swedenborg, en studie ofver hans stveckling till mystiker ech andaskadare (Swedenborg, a study of his development to mystic and seer), Stockholm 1913; Ernst Benz, Swedenborg in Deutschland (Swedenborg in Germany), Frankfurt-an-Main, 1947; and his Emanuel Swedenborg, Maturforscher und Scher (Emanuel Swedenborg, Scientist and Mystic) Munich, 1948; Sig. Toksvig, Emanuel Swedenborg, Scientist and Mystic (New Haven, 1948), which considers his relation to psychic research; C.S. Sigstedt, The Swedenborg Epic (New York, 1952), and Inge Jonsson, Emanuel Swedenborg (New York, 1971), which seeks to set the man within the history of ideas.

3. For a list of Swedenborg's doctrinal writings see Appendix C.

4. James Hyde A Bibliography of the Works of Emanuel Swedenborg, (London 1906).

5. The London Magazine or Gentleman's Monthly Intelligencer, for September 1749, carried a brief notice of the initial volume of Arcana Caelestia.

6. "I have received a letter informing me that not more than four copies had been sold in two months". Lewis must have informed Swedenborg, and it is recorded in Spiritual Diary 4422, 1464. An extract appears in Cyriel Odher Sigstedt, The Swedenborg Epic, (New York 1952) p. 233.

7. The letter is reproduced in Tafel Documents vol.2., part 1, Document 258.

8. John Hutchinson published in 1724 the first part of a work entitled Moses' principia, in which he attacked Newton's theory of gravitation and defended the Mosaic cosmogony.

9. The full text of the advertisement appears in Tafel Documents, vol.2, part 1, pp. 492 - 497.

10. Tafel Documents 258.

11. A.K. Walker, William Law: his life and work, (London 1973) p.221, 'Law wrote Langcake asking for the eighth volume of Arcana Caelestia'. The full text of this letter is given in Christopher Walton's Notes and materials for an adequate biography of William Law (London 1854) p. 597.

    For a discussion of 'Law and Swedenborg', see my Spiritual Reformers: Boehme, Law and Swedenborg (unpublished MTh thesis, Geneva Theological College, USA, 1976), especially Chapter 5.

12. John Penderill-Church, William Cookworthy 1705 - 1780, (Truro 1972).

13. A.M. Beilby, Rev. Thomas Hartley, M.A., (London 1931).

14. A.Douglas-Selleck, Cookworthy, 1705 - 80 and his circle, (Plymouth 1978) p.109.

15. A Memoir of the late Rev. John Clowes M.A., (Manchester 1834).

16. Cited in Theodore Compton Life of the Rev. John Clowes, M.A., (London 1898), p.92.

17. Thomas Hartley 'A short defense of the Mystical Writers', appended to Paradise Restored: or a Testimony of the Blessed Millenium.

18. Compton, op.cit. pp. 21 - 23.

19. Monthly Review 42 (June 1770) pp. 445 - 49 : reproduced in Tafel Documents vol.2, pp. 1010 - 11.

20. John Henry Liden's letter of 29th August 1769, reproduced in Tafel Documents Vol.2, pp. 701 - 3.

21. J.E. Elliott, Ed. Small Theological works and letters of Emanuel Swedenborg, (London 1975) pp. 311 - 313.

22. D.K. and M. McCallum, New Church House and its Origins 1782 - 1982, (Manchester 1982).

23. The Preface to Divine Providence, though not signed, is acknowledged to be by the Rev. John Clowes, and Blake called it 'Priestcraft'. In his article reviewing Blake's annotations, H. Stanley Redgrove accepts that the Preface was written by Robert Hindmarsh, (New Church Magazine Jan - Mar 1925, pp. 38 - 44).

24. Heaven and Hell, and Earths in the Universe are drawn from the inter chapter material to be found in Arcana Caelestia.

4: The Theosophical Society

1. Personal details, on Hindmarsh and the Society, can be found in the early chapters of the postumously issued work, Rise and Progress of the New Jerusalem Church in England, America, and Other Parts, Robert Hindmarsh, edited by Edward Madeley, (London 1861). Cited as Rise and Progress.

2. Op.cit. pp. 10 - 11.

3. Dr. William Spence was the author of Essays in Divinity and Physic, with an Address to Her Royal Highness the Duchess of York, printed by Robert Hindmarsh, 1792. Spence also edited Apocalypsis Explicata.

4. Rise and Progress, pp 17 - 18.

5. Ibid, pp. 18 - 22 with Peckett's testimony in full.

6. Ibid, p. 23.

7. Idem.

8. Ibid, p. 25.

9. Ibid. pp. 34 - 5. A list of members can be found in Appendix D.

10. Ibid. p. 25.

11. Among the works translated and published by Robert Hindmarsh were, Last Judgment, Brief Exposition, Summary Exposition of the Psalms, Hieroglyphic Key, White Horse, Coronis.

12. Rise and Progress p.. 35.

13. Idem.

14. Divine Love and Wisdom, paragraph 414.

5: Distinguished members of the Theosophical Society

1. David V. Erdman 'Blake's Early Swedenborgianism: A Twentieth-Century Legend', (Comparative Literature V (1953) pp. 247 - 57).

2. Blake Records p. 17.

3. Tafel Documents, vol. 1. p. 620 - 22, Note 20.

4. See Appendix D.

5. Divine Love and Wisdom, 414.(K 96)..

John Flaxman

1. Geoffrey Wills, Wedgwood, (London 1989) p. 77.

2. Letter 14, 21 September 1800 (K 801 - 2)

3. Blake Records, p. 19. Bentley suggests the date for the trip as September 1780.

4. Ibid, p. 24.

5. Ibid, p. 25.

6. Idem.

7. Blake Records, p. 28.

8. J.T. Smith, A Book for a Rainy Day, p.81 cited in Blake Records, pp. 26 - 7.

9. Idem.

10. Wilson, op.cit., p.273.

11. Blake Records, p.27 - 28.

12. Ibid, p. 29.

13. Morchard Bishop, Blake's Hayley - the Life, Works and Friendships of William Hayley, (London 1951) p.78.

Rev. Jacob Duché

1. Material gathered from Two articles upon the Rev. Jacob Duché (New Church College Library), being 'The Rev. Jacob Duché, the First Chaplain of Congress', by the Rev. Edward Duffield Neill, The Pennsylvania Magazine, No., 5, 1878, and 'Rev. Jacob Duché', The American Historical Record, March 1874. Also from information found in the following articles: 'The Rev. Jacob Duché', by Charles Higham, The New Church Record, March 1874, "The Rev. Jacob Duché' by Charles Higham, The New Church Review (1915) pp. 210 - 25 and 402 - 20. "The Rev. Jacob Duché, by C.H. Presland, New Church Magazine, Jan - April 1976, pp. 14 - 20.

2. Higham, op.cit., p. 218.

3. Ibid., p. 220.

4. Rise and Progress, pp. 40 - 41.

5. Dodd's book is discussed in Higham's article (copy now in the Academy Library) New Church Magazine 1911 pp. 213 - 9 .

6. Hurd's book, see New Church Magazine, 1901, pp. 414 - 18.

7. The Intellectual Repository, 1836 - 7, p. 105.

8. James Dakeyn, 'Samuel Dawson', New Church Magazine 1850.

9. Theodore Compton, The Life and Correspondence of the Rev. John Clowes, M.A., p. 34.

10. David V. Erdman, Blake: Prophet against Empire, p. 36.

11. W.S. Baker, William Sharp (Philadelphia 1875).

12. Hayley's Memoirs i pp 444-445, Cited in J.G. Davies, The theology of William Blake (Oxford 1957) p.33 .

Benedict Chastanier

1. See "Benedict Chastanier and the Illuminati of Avignon", James Hyde, New Church Review April 1907, pp. 181 - 205.

2. Cyriel Odhner Sigstedt, The Swedenborg Epic, Robert Peacock showed Chastanier a copy of the English edition of Arcana Caelestia, volume 2, and arranged to take a number of friends to see Swedenborg. Chastanier was not able to go with them on the appointed day. Peacock later reported to Chastanier, 'It's an old fool who pretends to keep angels and spirits in bottles' p. 379.

3. Ibid, pp. 192 - 194.

4. Ibid, pp. 196 - 197.

5. William Blake: Essays in Honour of Sir Geoffrey Keynes, ed. Morton D. Paley and Michael Phillips (Oxford 1973).

6. Milton, 15, lines 21 - 27 (K 497).

7. Chastanier's translation of a portion of Swedenborg's Spiritual Diary.

8. New Jerusalem Magazine, 1790, p. 240.

9. The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, plates 7 - 10.

C.F. Nordenskjöld

1. The style of 'Charles Frederick Nordenskjöld' has been followed because of the extensive correspondence Dr. Emanuel Tafel had with this gentleman. More often than not he is called "C.F., Nordenskjöld", and his father "C.F. Nordenskjöld Sr.". In the Tafel Documents, Note 20, p. 620, Rudolf Tafel speaks of him as 'Carl Frederick Nordenskjöld'. Hindmarsh refers to him as 'Mr. Frederick Nordenskjöld" (Rise and Progress, p.21, footnote).

2. Mention has been made of the desire of some to change the name of the Society from that of Theosophical to that of Philanthropic. The name used by Nordenskjöld for his Society in Sweden was the "Philanthropic Exegete Society".

3. The letter is headed 'Early History of the New Church', and Emanuel Tafel incorporates material he has received in letters from C.F. Nordenskjöld (New Church Magazine, vol. 33, Boston 1861, pp. 541 - 548).

4. Tafel letter, citing Nordenskjöld, reads, 'William Spence, doctor apothecary, a man extremely honorable and beneficent, although his means were moderate. God had chosen him to be my benefactor, and I transferred to him by way of gratitude, all the posthumous manuscripts which I carried with me from Stockholm, and which now stands in their catalogue" (that is, the catalogue of the Theosophical Society in London), p. 543.

5. Tafel Documents, p. 621.

6. The "Memoirs" are printed in full as Document No. 5 in the Tafel Documents, pp. 30 - 48, and dated March 29, 1782. There is also a Supplement, pp. 49 - 51.

7. Tafel letter, in which Nordenskjöld writes, 'During my residence in Stockholm, I one day paid a visit to Mr. Swedenborg's gardener's wife, who, with her husband, served him. She was supported by a charity establishment. She told me that Swedenborg often lay several days in his bed without eating. He had given orders that she should not awake him or touch him in this state, but put a kettle before his bed, filled with water. When he awoke, he did not feel the least weakness, but was as robust as if he had made good cheer all the time" (p. 543). This letter of Nordenskjöld is dated May 1, 1822.

8. Tafel Documents, Note 20, p. 620, mention is made of the extensive correspondence Nordenskjöld had with Emanuel Tafel, and how the correspondence and literary remains are in the hands of his youngest son Dr. O. von Nordenskjöld in Berlin.

9. See New Jerusalem Magazine, 1790.

10. See Thomas Robinson, Remembrances of a Recorder, (Manchester 1864) p.94.

11. Morton D. Paley, 'A New Heaven is Begun', Blake: An Illustrated Quarterly, 12, No.2 1979, p.83.

Carl Berns Wadström

1. Brian Kingslake, 'Charles Berns Wadström', New Church Magazine XCV (1976), pp. 45 - 55.

2. An engraving by W.Pyott after Breda's painting was published in 1792 under the title, 'The Benevolent Effects of Abolishing Slavery, on the Planter instructs his Negro'.

3. An Essay on Colonisation.

4. Ibid, Vol. 1 95, paragraph 149.

5. Swedenborg's Continuation of the Last Judgment, para. 75.

6. Blake's annotation to Divine Love and Wisdom, para. 11.

Phillip James de Loutherbourg

1. J. Hyde, Biography of Swedenborg's Works, under the section 'Portraits of Swedenborg', No. 3404, p. 681.

2. Alexander Gilchrist, Life of William Blake, , p. 38.

F.H. Barthelemon

1. "The First New Church Composer", New Church Life, 1895, pp.102 - 103, 153 - 155.

6. Society for the Promoting of the Doctrines of the New Jerusalem

1. Rise and Progress p. 53.

2. Ibid., p.54.

3. Ibid., p. 56.

4. Ibid., p. 57.

5. Ibid., p. 58.

6. Ibid., p. 66.

7. Ibid., p. 67.

7. The Sectarian Movement 1787 - 89

1. True Christian Religion, chapter XIV, section heading VIII.

2. Divine Love and Wisdom, para. 202 (K 92).

3. True Christian Religion No. 387 (4).

4. In addition to his translation of Swedenborg's works, the Rev. John Clowes wrote commentaries on the Psalms, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and books of Sermons: Israelites, Beatitudes, Ten Virgins, Twelve Hours, and other studies, Mediums, Dialogues, Parables, Miracles, etc.

5. Theodore Compton, Life and Correspondence of the Rev. John Clowes, (London 1874).

6. Ibid, p. 33.

7. Idem.

8. Rise and Progress, p. 83.

9. The contents of the letter is reproduced by Compton, op.cit., pp. 48 - 51.

10. C.R. Cragg, Reason and Authority in the 18th Century, (Cambridge 1964) pp. 181 - 215, 250 - 275.

11. Rise and Progress, p. 59.

12. Ibid., p. 54.

13. Ibid., p. 57.

14. Ibid., p. 58.

15. Ibid., p. 60.

16. For a discussion on the first ordination see the Preface to Minutes of the First Seven Sessions of the General Conference of the New Church (London 1885).

17. Compton, op. cit., pp. 50 - 51.

18. Reasons for Separation from the Old Church: the letter is reproduced in full, including the signatures of members in Rise and Progress, pp. 75 - 78.

19. Hindmarsh, Rise and Progress, p.80. See Appendix C.

20. See Appendix A.

8. The General Conference, April 1789

1. See Appendix B for copy of the Circular Letter.

2. Opening address by Mr. Henry Peckitt of London. The Minutes of the First General Conference, along with a copy of the Circular Letter can be found in Minutes of the First Seven Sessions of the General Conference of the New Church (London 1885). They can be found in Rise and Progress of the New Jerusalem Church in England, America and other parts, Robert Hindmarsh (ed. Edward Madeley, London:1861). The First General Conference, extract from Rise and Progress is reprinted in Blake and Swedenborg (New York 1985), pp. 121 - 131.

3. Hindmarsh, Rise and Progress, pp. 59 - 60.

4. Blake's name, along with others, as having assented to the resolutions of Conference, is to be found in the Minute Book of the Great East Cheap Society (reprinted in the Minutes of the First Seven Sessions of the General Conference of the New Church, p. xx).

5. Kathleen Raine, Golgonooza, City of Imagination, 'Blake, Swedenborg and the Divine Human', pp. 74 - 99. Désirée Hirst, Hidden Riches : Traditional Symbolism from the Renaissance to Blake. Bernard Newfield-Cookson, William Blake: Prophet of Universal Brotherhood (London 1968).

6. Blake's character and honesty can be seen in a letter to Butts, 16 August, 1803. 'If a Man offends me ignorantly & not designedly, surely I ought to consider him with favour & affection. Perhaps the simplicity of myself is the origin of all offences committed against me... I must now express to you my conviction that all is come from the spiritual World of God for Good & not for Evil'. (K 828).

7. 'The books of the Word are all those that have an internal sense; and those that have not are not the Word. The books of the Word in the Old Testament are the five books of Moses, the book of Joshua, the book of Judges, the two books of Samuel, the two books of Kings, the Psalms of David, the Prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, the Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi; and in the New Testament, the four Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John and the Apocalypse' (Arcana Caelestia 10.325)

8. Jerusalem, plate 47 (K 677).

9. Ibid, plate 48 (K 677).

10. Jean Hagstrum, 'Blake and the Sister-Arts Tradition' in Blake's Visionary Form Dramatic, ed. D.V. Erdman and J.E. Grant (Princeton 1970) p.88.

11. See F.B. Curtis, 'The Geddes Bible and the Tent of the Eternals in The Book of Urizen'(Blake Newsletter 6 (1973), pp. 93-94). Geddes was a friend of Fuseli and they frequently dined at the home of Joseph Johnson; Blake also dines at Johnson's.

12. See G.W.H. Lampe, 'The Reasonableness of Typology', Essays in Typology Ed. Lampe and Woollacome,(London 1957) pp. 13 - 14.

13. Francois Fenelon, Dialogues on Eloquence in General, translated by William Stevenson (London 1808), p.96.

    In Plate 13, Marriage of Heaven and Hell, the biblical actions mentioned can be found in Isaiah 20:3; Ezekiel 4:4,12,15. Cf Revelation 10:10.

14. The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, plate 13.

15. Leslie Tannenbaum, Biblical Tradition in Blake's Early Prophecies, (Princeton 1982) p. 43.

16. 'The work of this visionary (Swedenborg) are well worthy the attention of Painters and Poets; they are foundations of grand things' Descriptive Catalogue, VIII (K 581).

17. Tannenbaum, op.cit., p 44.

18. Ibid, p.53.

19. See annotation to Divine Love and Wisdom, 237 (K 93).

20. Last Judgment. "As regards the state of the church, it is this which will be dissimilar hereafter; it will indeed by similar in the outward, but dissimilar as to the internal form. To outward appearance there will be divided churches as before; their doctrines will be taught as before; and likewise the religions among the gentiles. But the man of the church will hereafter be in a more free state of thinking on matters of faith, that is on the spiritual things that relate to heaven, because spiritual liberty has been restored' (n. 74).

21. In a Memorable Relation (True Christian Religion, 508), there appeared a magnificent temple and over the gate was written 'Now it is allowable' (Nunc Licet) which signified that one may now enter with understanding into the mysteries of faith .

22. Blake Record, p235.

23. Songs of Experience. 'The Garden of Love', plate 44.

24. Jerusalem, 'To the Christian' (K 716).

25. Blake Records, pp. 7 - 8.

26. Rise and Progress, p. 25.

27. Ibid., p. 30.

28. Ibid., p. 66.

9. The London Universal Society

1. Robert Hindmarsh, on behalf of the sectarians, was to issue a journal entitled New Magazine of Knowledge, March 1790.

2. This translation was issued in three parts subjoined to the New Jerusalem Magazine: Servante was to later issue it as a complete work under the title, The delights of wisdom respecting Conjugal Love, under the imprint of the London Universal Society for the Promotion of the New Jerusalem Church.

3. The first proposals for the publication in English of Spiritual Diary were issued as an appendix to the New Jerusalem Magazine in 1790. The completed work was issued by the London Universal Society in 1791.

4. 'An Address to the Society of the New Church meeting in Friars Street, near Ludgate Hill, London', by Manoah Sibly, p.3.

5. J.A. Tulk, A Letter containing a few plain observations (London 1807).

6. Conjugial Love. 'On Concubinage', paragraphs 462 - 476.

7. Tafel Documents vol. 1, pp. 628 - 30. Note 27; see also Note 35.

8. Servante's letter 16 February 1806 (Tafel Documents vol. 2, no. 1188).

9. True Christian Religion No. 508.

10. Up to May 4th 1789 the whole Book, from the first day, seems to be in his handwriting (R. Hindmarsh); and after that date, until April 11 1790, The account of the proceedings, from Page 46 to 63 have been torn out and are missing. This torn section must contain information regarding the expelling of certain members. ('Mislaid Minute Books', New Church Magazine, Nov/Dec. 1917, Charles Higham, pp. 511 - 518, 559 - 566).

11. Wilson, op.cit, p. 72.

12. New Jerusalem Magazine, 1790, p. V.

13. Ibid, p. 209.

14. Ibid, pp. 119 - 125.

15. Studia Swedenborgiana, Vol.4, January 1983, No.3, p. 4.

10. Swedenborgian Patrons

1. He was the son of the maid Miss Betts, Bishop, op.cit, p.61.

2. Ibid, p. 191.

3. Ibid, p. 196.

4. Letter to William Hayley, 6 May 1800 (K 797).

5. Letter to John Flaxman 21 September 1800 (802).

6. David V. Erdman, Blake: Prophet against Empire, p.111.

7. In 1812 he was one of the initial editors of the newly established, Intellectual Repository; later he was to be ousted by Samuel Noble as editor. In 1825 he sponsored The Light of Dawn; then the New Jerusalem Magazine and Theological Inspector from 1826-1828. There then followed the New Jerusalem Magazine, new series. He wrote Spiritual Christianity (London 1846).

8. 'Testimony collected by J.J. Garth Wilkinson', Tafel Documents, pp.557-558; for the circumstances of this examination of the skull, see Hindmarsh's Rise and Progress, pp.398-403.

9. The Cameo is reported by Charles Pooley in Mary Catherine Hume, A Brief Sketch of the Life, Character and Religious Opinions of Charles Augustus Tulk, (Boston 1850) p.17. Caroline Tulk reports 'Mr. Flaxman by your Grandfather's C.A. Tulk) desire, employed the celebrated Caputi of Rome to cut a cameo of the head of Swedenborg'.

10. From a manuscript in the Swedenborg Society by Caroline Tulk we read, 'The origins of the friendship between the Tulk family and the Flaxmans & the Poet Coleridge was the admiration of both Sculptor & Poet for Marmaduke Tulk (brother of Caroline A.Tulk) when an infant of a few months old. They saw him in his nurse's arms at the sea-side & "fell in love with him". The acquaintance thus began quickly ripened into an intimate friendship between the families, especially with the Flaxman's & Denmans (sister of Mrs. Glaxman). They often came to Marble Hall, Twickenham, where Mr. Charles Augustus Tulk then lived & Flaxman made many sketches of his large family'. See Blake Records, p.42 for the portraits in 1816 of Mrs. Tulk and family.

11. See R.H. Deck, 'New Light on C.A. Tulk, Blake's 19th century Patron', Blake and Swedenborg ed. H. Bellin and D. Ruhl.

12. Blake Records, pp. 241-242.

13. Geoffrey Keynes, Blake Studies, (London 1949) p.82.

14. G. Keynes, 'Blake, Tulk and Garth Wilkinson', The Library 4th Ser. 26 (1945), p.191. Blake Studies, p.42. Corrections to the volume are in Blake's own hand. The work is in the H.H. Huntington Library.

15. Blake Records, p.242.

16. Ibid, p.250.

17. G. Keynes, Blake Studies, prints the letter in full, pp.82-84 with Coleridge ratings for each poem.

18. Collected Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, ed. E.L. Griggs volume IV, p. 837.

19. Ibid., Letter IV p. 834.

20. M.C. Hume, A brief sketch of the Life, Character and Religious Opinions of Charles Augustus Tulk, p.14.

21. The quotation comes from a manuscript note by the Rev. William Manson, "Biographical sketch of the late Rev. William Manson", Intellectual Repository 'enlarged series' 10 (1863) p.320.

22. James Spilling 'Blake, Artist and Poet' (New Church Magazine 6 (1887), p. 253; he also wrote a further article, "Blake the Visionary' (New Church Magazine 6 (1887) pp. 204-11).

23. Spilling, 'Blake, Artist and Poet', p.254.

24. The Hatton Garden 'Temple' was opened in 1797, and "The Divine Image" was written 1789. It is often suggested that Blake made the remark for the edification of his Swedenborgian patron. The Rev. Dennis Duckworth (Member of the Library and Documents Committee, General Conference of the New Church, London) believes that Blake wrote the poem in the East Cheap Chapel. Did the inspiration come to Blake as he sat in East Cheap Society for the First General Conference? Did he make a rough draft? Did he approach John Augustus Tulk, who bought the final draft from him? The use made by his son, C.A. Tulk, of 'The Divine Image' suggests it was long in his possession, as the poem itself does not appear in many editions of the 'Songs'.

25. Blake Records, p.325.

26. There was the edition sponsored by Matthew and Flaxman of Poetical Sketches; 'The Chimney Sweeper' appeared in The Chimney Sweeper's Friend(1824 and 1825) and 'Holy Thursday' in City Scenes (1818) Records 284n and 254n.

27. B.H. Malkin printed a few of Blake's poems in A Father's Memoirs of His Child 1806 (Blake Records) pp.421-31.

28. 'The Divine Image' differs in accidentals in The Dawn of Light, as does 'On Another's Sorrow'. This shows the free use Tulk was able to make of these two poems without reference to their author.

29. University of London: Proprietors of Shares. (London: S. Holdsworth, Printer, 66 Paternoster Row, London, n.d.)

30. Swedenborg Society for Printing Report 1829, p. 6.

31. Blake Records, p.381.

32. A review of The Times appears in the Intellectual Repository N.S. 2 (1826-27, p. 435).

33. James Spilling, 'Blake the Visionary' (New Church Magazine 6, 1887). Henry Crabb Robinson reports that Blake spoke highly of Swedenborg, 'he had done much good, and will do much good'. He also comments, 'Wilkinson, a very remarkable person, a mystic, a follower of Swedenborg and a great admirer of Blake. We talk only about Blake'. (Books and Writers) p. 675. On this occasion Wilkinson had taken Emerson to dine at the Field home.

34. J.J. Garth Wilkinson published: William Blake, Songs of Innocence and of Experience (London: Pickering, Newberry, 1839).

35. G. Keynes, 'Blake, Tulk and Wilkinson' The Library, 4th ser. (1945), p. 191.

36. R.H. Deck, 'New Light on Tulk, Blake's 19th Century Patron', (Blake and Swedenborg. eds. H.F. Bellin and D. Ruhl) p. 116.

Section 3: Blake's opinion of Swedenborg

11. Swedenborgian works available to Blake

1. Edwin Ellis The Real Blake, (London 1907) pp. 106-109.

2. Blake Records, pp. 7 - 8.

3. W.B. Scott, Catalogue of the Burlington Fine Arts Club Exhibition of the Works of William Blake, 1876, p.10: cited in Blake in the Nineteenth Century, D. Dorinan, p. 191.

4. Letter to James Blake, 3 January 1803 (K 819-822).

5. The Pickering MS is a manuscript volume of twenty-one octavo pages containing fair copies of eleven poems by Blake, including 'The Mental Traveller' and 'Auguries of Innocence', Max Plowman, ed. William Blake Poems and Prophecies, (London 1976) pp.324-399.

6. The Letter of Frederick Tatham to Francis Harvey 8 June 1864, cited in G. Keynes, Blake Studies, p.157.

7. His name appears on the subscription list of the following: J.G. Stedman; Narrative of a Five Years' Expedition Against the Revolted Negroes of Surinam, London 1796, C.H.Tatham, Three Designs for the National Monument proposed to be erected in Commemoration of the late Glorious Victories of the British Navy, 1802; William Collier's Poems on Various Occasions, with Translations, London, 1800. Stockdale's edition of Gay's Fables 1793; Jacob Duche, Discourses, London 1779.

8. G. Keynes, Blake Studies, 'Blake's Library', pp.155-162, which first appeared in The Times Literary Supplement (1959) lviii,648.

9. Keynes does not make mention of Heaven and Hell in the article of 1959, but reference is found in the Supplement to Blake Complete Writings, p.929.

10. Cited in Hyde's Bibliography of the Works of Emanuel Swedenborg, n. 2042.

11. Idem. n.2201.

12. On the title page of the second monthly issue of New Jerusalem Magazine for 1790, we read 'To the Magazine will be added Monthly SIXTEEN PAGES (beautifully and uniformly printed, so as to bind separately) Of a Translation from the Latin, on that invaluable work entitled, the DELIGHTS OF WISDOM concerning CONJUGAL LOVE'.

13. The subject of Concubinage is discussed in paragraphs 462-476 of Conjugial Love.

14. Preface to The Delights of Wisdom Respecting Conjugal Love.

15. E.g. Dialogues.

16. Mark Schorer, William Blake, the Politics of Vision.

17. H.N. Morris 'Blake and Swedenborg', (New Church Herald XXX nos. 1293-4, 1928), pp.157-9, 165-7, 195-7 .

18. Mona Wilson, The Life of William Blake, p.72.

19. The Marriage of Heaven and Hell (K 151); see also Vision of the Daughters Albion (K 194).

20. 'William Bond', Poems from the Pickering MS (K 434).

21. Ibid (K 436).

22. Wilson, op.cit. p.72.

23. Morris article, p.159.

24. Blake's annotations are reproduced in Blake: Complete Writings (K 929).

25. Morris article, p.197.

26. Michael Davis, William Blake: a new kind of man, 'Tatham, misled by puritanical zeal, burnt many of Blake's manuscripts', p. 164.

12. Blake's Swedenborgian annotations

1. Blake's copy of Heaven and Hell is located in the Houghton Library, Harvard University. Divine Love and Wisdom, is located in the British Library, London. And Divine Providence, which was recently privately owned by Geoffrey Keynes, is now in the University Library, Cambridge.

2. In the Descriptive Catalogue, mention is made in Plate VIII (K 581), that the drawing is based on True Christian Religion, para. 623.

3. Inge Johnson, Emanuel Swedenborg (New York 1971) p.186.

4. James Spilling, 'Blake the Visionary', New Church Magazine, May 1887, p.210.

5. J.G. Davies, The Theology of William Blake, (Oxford 1957) p.53.

6. See 'Memoirs of William Blake', New Church Magazine, Jan.1832.

7. Garth Wilkinson published Blake's Songs of Innocence, without plates, in July 1839.

8. Descriptive Catalogue plate VIII (K 581), True Christian Religion, para. 62.

9. Annotations to Lavater's Aphorisms on Men (K 65).

10. Milton plate 22 line 50 (K 506).

a) Heaven and Hell

1. In 1758 Swedenborg published, Earths in the Universe, Heaven and Hell, The Last Judgment, The New Jerusalem and its Heavenly Doctrines and The White Horse.

b) Divine Love and Wisdom

1. Jerusalem, plate 5 lines 17-20 (K 623).

2. Henry Crabb Robinson, Blake, Coleridge, Wordsworth, Lamb, etc. ed. E. Morley (Manchester 1922) p.3.

3. Blake's annotation to Berkeley's Siris (K 775).

4. Last Judgment: English translation 1788: Continuation, 1791.

5. Jerusalem plate 17, line 34 (K 639).

6. Marriage of Heaven and Hell, plate 3 .

7. Divine Love and Wisdom 158.

c) Divine Providence

1. Harold Bloom, The Complete Poetry & Prose of William Blake, ed. Erdman and Bloom (New York 1983); G.P. Sabri-Tabrizi, The "Heaven and Hell" of William Blake (London 1973).

2. Rise and Progress of the New Jerusalem Church, Robert Hindmarsh, p. 126.

3. H. Stanley Redgrove, 'Blake's Annotations on Swedenborg's The Divine Providence', New Church Magazine Jan-Mar. 1925 pp. 38-44.

4. Letters to the Members of the New Jerusalem Church formed by Baron Swedenborg, Joseph Priestley (J. Thompson, Birmingham 1791; sold in London by Joseph Johnson). Blake did commissions for Johnson so he could have been aware of Priestley's opinions.

5. Milton, plate 22, lines 50-53 (K 506).

Section 4 : Blake Use of Swedenborgian Ideas

13. Swedenborgian Songs

1. J.H. Plumb 'The New World of Children in Eighteenth-Century England' Past and Present, 67 (May 1975); cited in Vision and Disenchantment: Blake's Songs and Wordsworth's Lyrical Ballards, Heather Glen, (Cambridge 1983) p.10.

2. A. Gilchrist, Life of William Blake, p.62.

3. Allan Cunningham, Life of William Blake, p.53.

4. W.H. Reid, The Rise and Dissolution of the Infedel Societies in this Metropolis (London 1800, new impression 1971 ed. Victor E. Newberg) p.69 cf. F.C. Harrison, The Second Coming Popular Millenarianis, 1780-1830 (London 1979).

5. cf. 'If the doors of perception were cleansed every thing would appear to man as it is, infinite' (Plate 14 The Marriage of Heaven and Hell).

6. 'We cannot find the key to the meaning of the early books by reading the final books', we must 'interpret the symbolism in its inter-relationship, each symbol in its context',Stanley Gardner, Infinity on the Anvil, (Blackwell 1954) p.30.

7. E.D. Hirsch, Innocence and Experience (Newhaven 1964).

8. G. Keynes and Edwin Wolf, William Blake, Illustrated Books (New York 1953). Eight issues of the work after 1815 were examined, and all followed a similar pattern. The one at variance to the pattern corresponds to an index originally thought to have been compiled by Blake, but not known to be suspect.

9. Blake printed and published the work himself in 1789. Only twenty-one original copies are known to exist. Songs of Experience was completed in 1794.

10. Bernard Blackstone,English Blake (Cambridge 1949) p.37.

11. R.E. Gleckner, The Piper and the Bard, (Detroit 1959) p.296. Blake himself wrote in The Four Zoas, lines 363-374, 'Unorganiz'd Innocence: An Impossibility. Innocence dwells with Wisdom, but never with Ignorance'(K 380).

12. Ibid. p.47.

13. Swedenborg, Heaven and Hell, paras. 15 and 23.

14. There is no natural religion (second edition) 'Application' (K 98).
15. Blake in conversation with Henry Crabb Robinson.
16. Blake and Tradition, Kathleen Raine, Vol.1 p.5.
17. Raine op.cit. p.4.
18. Swedenborg, Heaven and Hell, 89.
19. Raine, op.cit. p.5.
20. Arcana Caelestia Index and Vol.1 273.
21. Notebook 115 (K 162).
22. Raine, op.cit., p.6.
23. Wicksteed interprets the two postures as representing the spiritual and the material sides of man. J.H. Wicksteed, Blake's Innocence and Experience (London 1928).
24. W.H. Reid, The Rise and Dissolution of the Infidel Societies of the Metropolis, p.69.
25. In Luke's Gospel, chapter 15, there is lost sheep, lost coin, lost son.
26. J.H. Wicksteed, Blake's Innocence and Experience, p.83.
27. Swedenborg, Arcana Caelestia, para. 4060.
28. Ibid., para. 10,236.
29. Bernard Blackstone, English Blake, p.36.
30. Auguries of Innocence (K 431).

a) Songs of Innocence

1. Arcana Caelestia, para. 8443.

2. Blake's annotations to Divine Love and Wisdom, para. 11. The extract is from Continuation of the Last Judgement, para. 74.

3. Heaven and Hell, para. 166.

4. Jean Hagstrom 'Blake and the Sister Arts Tradition' in Blake's Visionary Forms Dramatic, ed. D.V. Erdman and J.E. Grant (Princeton 1970), p. 88.

5. Heaven and Hell, para. 282.

6. G. Keynes, Songs of Innocence and Experience, p. 134.

7. Heaven and Hell, para. 10.

8. Ibid., para. 326.

9. Ibid., para. 318.

10. Last Judgment (Posthumous) para. 113.

11. See David V. Erdman, Blake Prophet against Empire, pp. 156, 133, 511-15.

12. Earths in the Universe, para. 79.

13. Divine Love and Wisdom, para. 44.

14. True Christian Religion, para. 504.

15 The Four Zoas vii, 358-60 (K329).

16. Arcana Caelestia, para. 223.

17. Jacob Bronowski, A Man without a Mask (London 1972) p. 79.

18. Letter in the Swedenborg Society Archives, London.

19. Blake Records, p. 35.

20. Editor's note in the Nonesuch Edition of Blake, p. 50.

21. Blake places a mark by the side of paragraphs 332 and 334 of his edition of Heaven and Hell.

22. Heaven and Hell, para. 535.

23. Isaiah 11, verses 6 - 8.

24. Heaven and Hell, para. 414.

25. Ibid., para. 278.

26. Blake's Records, p. 252.

27. Heaven and Hell, para. 331.

28. Matthew 10, verse 30.

29. Ibid., verse 29.

30. Matthew 6, verse 26.

31. Idem.

b) Songs of Experience

1. Raymond Lister Infernal Method: A Study of William Blake, (London 1975) p. 55.

2. Isaiah 11:19, also 36:26.

3. Exodus 7:14.

4. Mark 3:5, also 10:5.

5. Heaven and Hell, para. 278.

6. Ibid. para. 364.

7. Ibid. para. 360.

8. Ibid. para. 332.

9. Ibid. para. 330.
10. Ibid. para. 340.
11. Ibid. para. 360.
12. Ibid. para. 364.
13. Idem.
14. Heaven and Hell, para. 343.
15. Ibid. para. 391.
16. Ibid. para. 110.
17. Conjugial Love, para. 50.
18. Ibid. para. 333.
19. Heaven and Hell, para. 344.
20. True Christian Religion, para. 809.
21. Ibid. para. 811.
22. Arcana Caelestia, Vol.1 para. 127.
23. Ibid. para. 129.
24. Ibid. para. 306.
25. Doctrine of the Lord, para. 35.
26. Heaven and Hell, para. 344.

14. The Marriage of Heaven and Hell

1. J. Bronowski, William Blake and the Age of Revolution, p. 179.

2. Sabri Tabrizi, op. cit., p. 15.

3. C.O. Sigstedt, The Swedenborg Epic, (New York 1952) p. 96.

4. Heaven and Hell, para. 386.

5. Ibid., para. 585.

6. Ibid., para. 184.

7. Ibid., para. 138.

8. The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, plate 7, line 11.

9. Blake's annotation to Divine Love and Wisdom, para. 432 (K 96).

10. Ibid., para. 220 (K 92).

11. Works issued: Earths in the Universe, Heaven and Hell, The Last Judgment, New Jerusalem and its Heavenly Doctrines, The White Horse.

12. True Christian Religion, para. 772.

13. A Vision of the Last Judgment, (K 612).

14. Heaven and Hell, para. 293.

15. Henry Crabb Robinson, Books and their Writers, p. 329.

16. Laocoon (K 777).

17. Arcana Caelestia, para. 1807. 'The Language of Correspondences is the language of God Himself', Preface to Hindmarsh's translation of Hieroglyphic Key. See also The Service of Correspondence Elucidated, E. Madeley.

18. Heaven and Hell, para. 171.

19. Ibid., para. 3.

20. Blake's annotations to Divine Love and Wisdom, para. 27 (K 91).

21. Wilson, op.cit. p.27.

22. Letter from Swedenborg to Rev. Thomas Hartley, Small Theological Works and Letters, ed. J.E.Elliott, pp.311 - 12.

23. Arcana Caelestia, para. 8443.

24. Apocalypse Revealed, para. 484.

25. 'Opposition is True Friendship', del. by pigment in all coloured copies, The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake, ed. David V. Erdman, p. 802.

26. A Philosopher's Note Book, excerpts from Philosphical Writers and from Sacred Scripture on a variety of Philosophical Subjects: together with some reflections, and Sundry Notes and Memoranda.

27. The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, plate 24, 'I have also: The Bible of Hell: which the world shall have whether they will or no.' Rossetti catalogued and uncoloured work, 'A Naked Man touching a Ram as he recedes. Daringly designed' : On the back Blake wrote in title-form, 'The Bible of Hell, in Nocturnal Visions Collected. Vol. 1. Lambeth'. (S. Foster Damon, William Blake, His Philosophy and Symbols, New York, 1947, p. 325).

15. Swedenborgian Symbolism

1. Michael David, William Blake, A new kind of man, 'The deists' claim that reason could comprehend religion made revelation redundant: but to Blake, revelation meant life. He always fought the deists because they denied the spirit and fettered imagination', p. 66.

2. Preface to Jerusalem (K 621).

3. S. Gardner, Infinity on an Anvil, p.5.

4. Blake's annotation of Swedenborg's Divine Love and Wisdom 220 (K 92).

5. Swedenborg True Christian Religion 212.

6. I am thinking of the double usage found in John's Gospel on the matter of Jesus being raised up; the cross becomes not the symbol of death, but of glory.

7. Swedenborg, Arcana Caelestia 2445.

8. There is no natural religion (second series) 'Application' (K 98).

New Church Canon

1. David Bindman, Blake as an artist, cites several of the watercolours Blake did for Butts, such as the cycle of the Life of Christ and the Life of Moses, and Bindman comments of the whole, 'they were produced at odd intervals at the dictate of Blake's angels, perhaps when he was in need of money or when he was not occupied with engraving or writing' (p. 144).

2. In a letter to James Blake in 1803, he writes, 'I go on Merrily with my Greek and Latin; am very sorry that I did not begin to learn languages early in my life as I find it very Easy; am now learning my Hebrew. I read Greek as fluently as an Oxford scholar & the Testament is my chief master' (K 821).

3. E.g. Genesis 13.2, 'Abram was very rich in cattle means the goods which the Lord was at the time enriched. Silver means truths. And gold means good deriving from truths' (Arcana Caelestia 1549). 'The nature of representatives is such that no attention at all is paid to the character of the representative person, only to the thing which he represents' (Arcana Caelestia 1409).

4. The list of books can be found in the Invitation letter, Proposition X11 (See Appendix B). Proposition X11 was considered on the first day of Conference.

5. 'Correspondences are grounded in use, representatives in rituals of religion and human operation, and significatives in what is uttered or written; the whole having the same ground of meaning is included in the phrase - the science of correspondences' (The Science of Correspondences elucidated, E. Madeley).

Correspondence

1. Blake did fifty tempera pictures illustrating the Bible, now known as the Butts series. (Morton D. Paley, William Blake , p.42).

2. Arcana Caelestia, volume 2 only, was translated into English, at Swedenborg's expense in 1750. The entire work was translated by the Rev. John Clowes and published from 1783 - 1806.

3. A Vision of the Last Judgment (K 607).

4. Arcana Caelestia, 1144.

5. A Vision of the Last Judgment (K 611).

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1. True Christian Religion para. 45, sub-section 2.

2. Heaven and Hell, para. 555.

Ulro

1. Four Zoas, plate 1.102 (K 267).

2. Milton, plate 29.15 (K 516).

3. Divine Love and Wisdom, para. 65.

The Mortal Part

1. The Everlasting Gospel (K 749)

2. Songs of Experience, 'To Tirzah' plate 52.

The Grand Man

1. Songs of Innocence, 'The Divine Image' plate 18.
2. Divine Love and Wisdom, 318.
3. Heaven and Hell, 52.
4. Idem.
5. A Vision of the Last Judgment (K 607).
6. The Four Zoas (K 277).

The Divine Humanity

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8. Jerusalem 19- 21 (K 672).

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2. J.G. Davies, The Theology of William Blake, p.53.

3. Blake's Marriage of Heaven and Hell, plate 20.

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